THE WORLD OF BLACK HAMMER™

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN AND THE LEGION OF EVIL AND
DOCTOR ANDROMEDA AND THE KINGDOM OF LOST TOMORROWS

JEFF LEMIRE DAVID RUBÍN MAX FIUMARA

DAVE STEWART NATE PIEKOS

ORMSTON

ON *SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN*:

"Rubín's skillful, conscious choices throughout *Sherlock Frankenstein* . . . make each panel and each page feel like the art itself is moving us towards answers, towards the truth that we're all looking for. His method of integrating the lettering into the art, especially the sound effects, provide a real kinetic energy to the panels."

—Multiversity Comics

"With *Sherlock Frankenstein and The Legion of Evil*, the world of *Black Hammer* gets richer, deeper, and a hell of a lot more fun."

—Nerdist

". . . There's still a certain charm to the *Black Hammer* franchise regardless of setting or focus. Jeff Lemire and David Rubín conjure up all manner of oddball characters . . ."

—IGN

"Show-stopping, beautiful visuals with quiet character moments."

—Newsarama

"I'm not sure what I can tell you about *Sherlock Frankenstein* that you can't already see. An inventive, atmospheric book brought to life by the dizzying talents of artist David Rubín, *Sherlock Frankenstein* draws you into its bizarre world—populated by the strangest, most beautifully drawn characters. It's hard not to love this book."

—John Arcudi (*Dead Inside*, *Rumble*)

ON *DOCTOR ANDROMEDA*:

"Heartfelt issue looking to explore parental ties, obsession, and, potentially, retribution."

—All-Comic

"An emotional and conflicted tale of classic heroism and how it all looks after hanging up the suit."

—Bleeding Cool

"This is everything awesome about classic comic books viewed through the rose-tinted goggles of modern day superheroics. I highly recommend it."

—Kaboooooom

"If you're already a *Black Hammer* fan then this should be viewed as an absolutely essential purchase, but given the strength of both the writing and the artwork, this could also be looked at as an equally enjoyable stand-alone series. Highly recommended either way."

—Big Comic Page

THE WORLD OF BLACK HAMMER™

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THE WORLD OF BLACK HAMMER™

LIBRARY EDITION VOLUME 1

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN AND DOCTOR ANDROMEDA

WRITTEN BY **JEFF LEMIRE**

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN AND THE LEGION OF EVIL

ART, COLORS, AND LETTERS BY **DAVID RUBÍN**

FLATS BY **KIKE J. DÍAZ**

CHAPTER BREAKS BY **DAVID RUBÍN, MIKE MIGNOLA, DEAN ORMSTON, DUNCAN FEGREDO, JEFF LEMIRE,** AND **DAVE STEWART**

METAL MINOTAUR COCREATED BY **GUS LEMIRE**

DOCTOR ANDROMEDA AND THE KINGDOM OF LOST TOMORROWS

ART BY **MAX FIUMARA**

COLORS BY **DAVE STEWART**

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SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN™

AND THE LEGION OF EVIL

DAVID A RUBIN

WELCOME TO THE HALL OF HAMMER!

SPIRAL CITY.

TEN YEARS AGO.

-AHEM-

I, UM... I'M USED TO SPENDING DAYS ALONE IN MY LAB SO YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE ME, I'M--UH...

...NOT MUCH OF A PUBLIC SPEAKER.

I SUPPOSE I SHOULD INTRODUCE MYSELF...

...MANY OF YOU PROBABLY DON'T REMEMBER ME, ESPECIALLY NOT *DRESSED LIKE THIS.*

MY NAME IS DR. **JAMES ROBINSON.** BUT ONCE I WAS ALSO KNOWN AS THE COSTUMED HERO ***DOCTOR ANDROMEDA.***

AND I'VE COME HERE TODAY, WELL, FOR THE SAME REASON YOU ALL HAVE.

I'VE COME TO **REMEMBER.**

AND I'VE COME TO PAY MY RESPECTS TO A GROUP OF THE BRAVEST MEN AND WOMEN SPIRAL CITY, **AND THE WORLD,** HAS EVER SEEN...

ABRAHAM SLAM...

...GOLDEN GAIL...

...BARBALIEN...

...COLONEL WEIRD...

...MADAME DRAGONFLY...

...AND BLACK HAMMER.

THREE DAYS AGO THEY SAVED US ALL.

RIGHT HERE IN THE STREETS OF SPIRAL CITY THEY FOUGHT AND DEFEATED ANTI-GOD.

WE STILL DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND WHO THIS "ANTI-GOD" WAS.

AND WE DON'T KNOW WHAT **REALLY** HAPPENED TO ABE AND GAIL AND THE OTHERS.

ALL WE KNOW FOR SURE IS THAT THEY ARE **GONE.**

AND IT WOULD SEEM THAT THEY SOMEHOW GAVE THEIR LIVES TO STOP **THE CATACLYSM.**

THE LAST THING ANYONE SAW WAS **BLACK HAMMER** DELIVERING THE FINAL BLOW AND ANTI-GOD EXPLODING IN A FLASH OF LIGHT AND ENERGY.

THE WORKING THEORY IS THAT THE HEROES WERE ENVELOPED AND DESTROYED IN THE EXPLOSION AS WELL.

WHEN ANTI-GOD FIRST APPEARED AND THE CATACLYSM STARTED, I CONSIDERED GETTING MY OLD COSTUME AND TRYING TO HELP.

BUT I--

I THOUGHT I WAS TOO OLD TO HELP.

THEN I SAW ABRAHAM SLAM ON THE NEWS.

SAME AGE AS ME, AND THERE HE WAS RUNNING INTO BATTLE WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.

THAT'S WHAT ALWAYS SEPARATED ABE, GAIL, AND BLACK HAMMER FROM THE REST OF US. THEY--

--THEY NEVER HESITATED.

THEY NEVER STOPPED TO WORRY ABOUT THEMSELVES.

...IT'S EMPTIER WITHOUT THEM.

TRUTH IS, THE WORLD HAS CHANGED...

SOMETHING IS MISSING...

BUT WE WILL NEVER FORGET THEM.

THE REST OF US WERE JUST *PRETENDERS* IN FUNNY COSTUMES.

...THEY ARE MISSING AND THERE IS NO EASY WAY TO REPLACE THEM.

THEY WERE TRUE HEROES, AND TO SAY THEY WILL BE MISSED DOESN'T EVEN BEGIN TO DO IT JUSTICE.

MRS. WEBER?

YES.

I, UH--

--I KNEW YOUR HUSBAND.

YES, OF COURSE.

YOU KNEW DADDY?

YES, LUCY.

DR. ROBINSON AND YOUR FATHER WERE... COLLEAGUES.

AND YOU MUST BE LUCY?

GOSH, YOUR DAD LOVED TO TALK ABOUT YOU, YOUNG LADY.

HE DID?

OH YES!

I COULD RARELY GET HIM TO TALK ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE.

HE WAS SO, SO PROUD OF YOU.

AND YOU MUST BE PROUD OF HIM TOO? ALL HE DID TO SAVE US.

YES--

BUT I MISS HIM.

I--I DON'T WANT HIM TO BE DEAD.

NOR DO I.

BUT HE DID WHAT HE DID SO THAT YOU CAN HAVE THE LIFE HE DREAMED OF FOR YOU, LUCY.

HECK, MAYBE ONE DAY YOU CAN EVEN GROW UP TO BE A HERO LIKE HIM, HUH?

THAT'S ENOUGH!

I'M SORRY, MA'AM, I DIDN'T MEAN TO--

THIS FAMILY HAS HAD **MORE THAN ENOUGH** OF HEROES AND VILLAINS FOR ONE LIFETIME, DOCTOR.

LET'S GO, LUCY!

EIGHT YEARS AGO.

--MY MOM WORKS AT SPIRAL GENERAL HOSPITAL AS A NURSE.

SHE WORKS NIGHTS A LOT.

AND MY DAD HAS THE COOLEST JOB EVER.

HE IS A FIREMAN!

THAT'S PROBABLY WHAT I'M GONNA BE TOO WHEN I GET OLD ENOUGH.

VERY GOOD, EUGENE!

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR SHARING WITH THE CLASS.

LET'S SEE, WHO'S NEXT...

...LUCY WEBER. READY, LUCY?

UM... YEAH.

WELL, MY MOM'S NAME IS LORRAINE AND SHE WORKS AS A RECEPTIONIST FOR A LAWYER IN THE EAST END. THAT'S NEAR WHERE WE LIVE.

SHE HAS WORKED THERE FOR SEVEN YEARS.

AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR DAD, LUCY?

WELL...

...MY DAD DIED A FEW YEARS AGO.

I KNOW, DEAR, BUT MAYBE YOU COULD TELL US A BIT ABOUT HIM?

WHAT DID HE DO?

MY DAD?

HOW WAS SCHOOL TODAY, LUCE?

FINE.

FINE?

THAT'S ALL?

WHAT DID YOU DO? ANYTHING EXCITING HAPPEN TODAY?

WHY CAN'T I TELL PEOPLE WHO DADDY REALLY WAS?

WHAT?

LUCY, YOU KNOW WHY.

IF PEOPLE KNEW THAT DAD WAS BLACK HAMMER, THEN--

THEN WHAT?

AREN'T YOU PROUD OF HIM, MOM?

I AM.

HE WAS, LIKE, THE GREATEST HERO EVER!
AND I CAN'T EVEN EVER TELL ANYONE!
IT JUST FEELS LIKE WE'RE LYING!

YOU ARE HIS DAUGHTER.

YOU **ALWAYS WILL BE!**

JUST BECAUSE YOUR **FRIENDS** DON'T KNOW THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT ANY LESS TRUE!

I DON'T CARE ABOUT MY FRIENDS KNOWING!
I JUST DON'T WANT PEOPLE TO **FORGET HIM!**
OR THE OTHER HEROES!

NO ONE IS **EVER** GOING TO FORGET THEM.

I LOVED YOUR FATHER!

I LOVED WHO HE WAS!

REALLY?!

BECAUSE MOST OF THE TIME YOU JUST ACT LIKE YOU'RE ASHAMED OF WHO HE WAS!

LUCY, JUST **THINK ABOUT** IT FOR A SECOND!

WHAT IF HIS OLD **ENEMIES** FOUND OUT AND CAME AFTER YOU?!

WE HAVE TO KEEP IT A SECRET TO KEEP YOU SAFE!

I DON'T WANT TO BE SAFE!
I WANT TO BE **BLACK HAMMER'S DAUGHTER!**

CLANG

SLAM!

TWO YEARS AGO.

I SEE YOU DO IT TOO?

EXCUSE ME?

THE SKY.

YOU WATCH THE SKY TOO.

LOOKING TO SEE IF THEY'RE UP THERE... IF THEY'RE EVER GOING TO COME BACK.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.

YES, YOU DO, MS. WEBER.

YOU KNOW DEEP IN YOUR GUT THAT THEY'RE NOT DEAD.

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM... BUT YOU KNOW IT'S NOT OVER.

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU KNOW WHO I AM, CREEP...

...BUT YOU BETTER GET LOST OR I'M GOING TO CALL THE COPS!

LUCY, WAIT!

IT'S ME, LUCY... JIMMY ROBINSON!

I--I KNEW YOUR DAD, REMEMBER?

DOCTOR ANDROMEDA! OF COURSE I REMEMBER YOU!

I HAVEN'T BEEN CALLED THAT IN A LONG TIME, LUCY.

I'M SORRY TO APPROACH YOU IN SUCH A CRYPTIC FASHION, BUT I--I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT.

CAN WE SIT?

I'M NOT AS YOUNG AS I ONCE WAS.

OF COURSE.

YES, I WATCH THE SKIES TOO, LUCY.

WAITING FOR--SOMETHING.

YES.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M EXPECTING THOUGH.

IT'S BEEN EIGHT YEARS SINCE THE CATACLYSM.

EIGHT YEARS SINCE THEY DISAP-PEARED.

MAYBE THAT'S JUST IT.

MAYBE YOU SHOULD STOP WAITING.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I'VE BEEN KEEPING TABS ON YOU, LUCY.
YOU'RE STARTING AT SPIRAL U NEXT FALL...JOURNALISM SCHOOL.

IF THEY ARE GOING TO BE FOUND, MAYBE IT'S YOU WHO NEED TO START LOOKING.

YES.

AND I HAVE NO PROOF TO SUPPORT THAT.

HECK, I'M A SCIENTIST, SO YOU'D THINK I'D NEED SOME... BUT--

--I DON'T KNOW, CALL IT A GUT FEELING.

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.

YOU REALLY THINK THEY'RE ALIVE?

IT'S THE SAME FOR ME.

BUT--HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIND THEM?

LIKE I SAID, I'M ONLY A SCIENTIST.

YOU'RE GOING TO BE THE JOURNALIST.

FLIPP

I DON'T KNOW WHAT PATH YOU NEED TO FOLLOW, LUCY, BUT MAYBE THIS CAN BE A START.

YOUR FATHER AND I BECAME CLOSE. WE SHARED A FEW ADVENTURES TOGETHER BEFORE I RETIRED. AND HE--TRUSTED ME. HE GAVE THIS TO ME IN THE EVENT THAT ANYTHING SHOULD EVER HAPPEN TO HIM.

HE SAID TO GIVE IT TO YOU WHEN YOU WERE OLD ENOUGH. I'D SAY THAT DAY HAS COME.

WHAT IS IT?

FRRPP

I'M NOT SURE...

BUT I'D SAY IT'S A LEAD, REPORTER.

1679-A BELMONT AVE.

WON'T YOU COME WITH ME, DOCTOR ANDROMEDA?

CALL ME JIMMY, PLEASE.

I'LL BE HERE IF YOU NEED ME, LUCY, BUT MY ADVENTURING DAYS ARE OVER...

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN.

BELMONT AVENUE
MY TURN.
I SORT OF FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN WAITING MY WHOLE LIFE TO HEAR THAT.
WAITING FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT MY DAD REALLY EXISTED AND THAT I CAN STILL BE A PART OF HIS STORY.
1679
1679-A ROMAN
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S MORE SURPRISING, THAT DOCTOR ANDROMEDA JUST DELIVERED THIS KEY TO ME FROM MY DAD OR THAT HE ACTUALLY BELIEVES THAT DAD AND THE OTHER HEROES ARE STILL ALIVE OUT THERE SOMEWHERE.
CHK!
BUT NONE OF THAT EVEN BEGAN TO PREPARE ME FOR WHAT I FOUND TODAY...
H-- HELLO?

BLEEP!

WEBER DNA MATCH DETECTED.

T-WEEP!

WHOA!!

DEFENSES SHUT DOWN.

CLUNG!!

WELCOME.

-SSSSKKKKHHHKK

WELCOME TO THE HALL OF HAMMER!!

NO WAY!

THE HALL OF HAMMER?!

MY DAD HAD A SECRET HIDEOUT AND HE LEFT THE KEY TO ME!

MY WHOLE LIFE ALL I EVER WANTED WAS TO KNOW MORE ABOUT MY DAD.

THE MICRO-MACHINE CASE#234: ADVENTURE IN THE MINIVERSE

WELL, HERE IT WAS, JUST WAITING FOR ME-- THE UNDISCOVERED WORLD OF BLACK HAMMER.

VENUS FRY-TRI CASE#24 ADVENTURE OF THE BURNING PLANT MEN

JUST BEING HERE I FELT CLOSER TO HIM THAN I HAD SINCE HE DISAPPEARED.

I KNEW I COULDN'T TELL MOM ABOUT THIS PLACE.

VILLAIN FILES #81

I KNOW SHE MEANS WELL, BUT SHE WOULD NEVER LET ME COME BACK HERE.

THIS PLACE HELD A LOT OF SECRETS.

AND IT HAD TO STAY THAT WAY.

CLICK!

BLEEPP!!

JUST A LITTLE SECRET BETWEEN ME AND DAD.

HELLO, LUCY.

IF YOU ARE WATCHING THIS, IT MEANS THAT I AM DEAD.

DAD?!

I'M SORRY, SWEETIE.

I WISH I WAS STILL WITH YOU, BUT I MADE MY CHOICE A LONG TIME AGO.

I CHOSE TO BE BLACK HAMMER AND I KNEW THE RISKS THAT WOULD COME WITH THAT.

AND IF YOU'RE IN THE HALL OF HAMMER, IT ALSO MEANS THAT DOCTOR ANDROMEDA DID WHAT I ASKED AND YOU'RE NOW ALL GROWN UP.

LUCY, THERE IS A VERY IMPORTANT REASON I WANTED DOC TO GIVE YOU THAT KEY. YOU SEE, THIS BASEMENT HEADQUARTERS CONTAINS EVERY MEMENTO, FILE, AND TRACE OF MY LIFE AS BLACK HAMMER.

AND I NEED YOU TO DESTROY IT ALL.

WHAT?!

LUCY, THIS LIFE...BEING BLACK HAMMER...I DON'T WANT IT TO EVER COME BACK ON YOU OR YOUR MOM.

I DON'T WANT ANY TRACE LEFT CONNECTING YOU TWO TO ME.

I DON'T REGRET THE PATH MY LIFE TOOK. I'M PROUD OF WHAT I ACCOMPLISHED IN THIS COSTUME.

I HELPED A LOT OF PEOPLE AND I SAVED A LOT OF LIVES.

BUT...I ALSO MISSED A LOT.

STANDING HERE NOW RECORDING THIS ON THE EQUIPMENT I GOT FROM NEW WORLD, YOU AND YOUR MOM ARE BACK HOME. YOU'RE ONLY SEVEN YEARS OLD NOW. I HAVE NO IDEA HOW OR WHEN I DIE.

BUT I DO KNOW THAT I PROBABLY MISSED A LOT OF YOUR LIFE.

I'LL NEVER GET THAT TIME WITH YOU BACK AND NEITHER WILL YOU.

SO, DESTROY EVERYTHING IN THIS PLACE AND LEAVE ME BEHIND.

MOVE ON WITH YOUR OWN LIFE AND DON'T WASTE ANOTHER MINUTE ON ME OR ON BLACK HAMMER.

MY LIFE IS OVER, BUT YOURS IS JUST STARTING, LUCY.

SO GO AND LIVE IT.

GOODBYE, SWEETHEART.

I'LL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU.

beep!

BUT YOU NEED TO LET BLACK HAMMER GO.

"LET BLACK HAMMER GO"?

NO!

I'M SORRY, DADDY, BUT I WON'T DO THAT.

EVER.

THIS PLACE AND EVERYTHING IN IT IS A PART OF YOU.

AND NOW IT'S A PART OF ME.

CHAK

BESIDES, I DON'T REALLY THINK I'M GOING AGAINST YOUR LAST WISHES ANYWAY...

...BECAUSE I DON'T REALLY THINK YOU'RE DEAD.

IT'S LIKE DOCTOR STAR SAID... I JUST FEEL IT IN MY GUT. YOU AND THE OTHERS ARE STILL OUT THERE SOMEWHERE AND I'M THE ONE THAT NEEDS TO FIND YOU.

AND NOW I KNOW WHERE TO START.

SO, NO, I WON'T LET YOU GO, DAD.

I'M COMING FOR YOU.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER...

...I AM GOING TO FIND YOU.

M 2017

VILLAIN FILES:

MANA

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN

METAL MINOT

CTHU-LOU

BLACK

MY NAME IS LUCY WEBER.

TEN YEARS AGO MY FATHER DISAPPEARED.

EVERYONE ELSE THINKS HE'S DEAD.

BUT I KNOW HE'S NOT.

PART ONE:

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN?

I HAVE NO PROOF TO BACK THIS BELIEF UP.

NO FACTS TO HELP SUPPORT MY CLAIM THAT HE'S STILL OUT THERE SOMEWHERE.

AND I'M A JOURNALIST, SO I SHOULD KNOW BETTER.

YET I'VE DEDICATED MY LIFE TO FINDING HIM AND HIS FRIENDS.

tyrpitty-tap-tap

tap-tyrpitty-tap

THIS BLIND FAITH MAY BE UNCONVENTIONAL, BUT THEN SO WAS MY FATHER...

MY DAD WAS BLACK HAMMER, CHAMPION OF SPIRAL CITY.

TEN YEARS AGO HE FOUGHT AGAINST A COSMIC ENTITY CALLED ANTI-GOD ALONG WITH THE CITY'S OTHER HEROES: GOLDEN GAIL, ABRAHAM SLAM, COLONEL WEIRD, AND MADAME DRAGONFLY.

THEY WON, BUT IN DEFEATING ANTI-GOD THEY ALL DISAPPEARED AND HAVEN'T BEEN SEEN OR HEARD FROM SINCE.

AND HERE I SIT, SURROUNDED BY THE SECRET EPHEMERA OF HIS LIFE, IN HIS HIDDEN BASE, THE HALL OF HAMMER, WITH NO CLUES AND NO LEADS.

SO IF I REALLY WANT TO FIND THEM, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING I CAN DO...

...I NEED TO GET TO WORK.

CHK

CHKT-CHKT-CHKT-CHKT-C

IF THERE AREN'T ANY CLUES, I NEED TO FIND SOME.

IF THERE AREN'T ANY LEADS, I NEED TO SEEK THEM OUT.

AND I WON'T STOP UNTIL I DO.

I MAY NOT HAVE A COSMICALLY POWERED HAMMER, BUT I DO HAVE ONE SUPERPOWER OF MY OWN.

I'M REALLY DAMN STUBBORN.

DOES THIS BUS GO ALL THE WAY WEST?

PAST THE BLUFFS?

YEP.

LAST STOP IS SPIRAL MANOR.

GREAT. THANKS.

CHK

I'LL ADMIT, I WAS ALMOST READY TO GIVE UP A FEW WEEKS AGO.

I'D EXHAUSTED EVERY AVENUE LOOKING FOR ANSWERS.

THEN IT HIT ME...

IF YOU WANT TO FIND A BUNCH OF SUPERHEROES BUT CAN'T, THE NEXT BEST PLACE TO START IS WITH THEIR SUPERVILLAINS.

FILES:

ANACONDA

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN

METAL MINOTAUR

CTHU-LOU

BLACK STALLION

SULTRIX

TENTED

AND IF YOU ARE GOING TO START WITH VILLAINS, THEN WHY NOT START WITH THE BIGGEST, BADDEST VILLAIN OF THEM ALL...

...SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN...

SCOURGE OF THE SUPERHEROES FOR AS LONG AS ANYONE CAN REMEMBER.

VERY LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT HIS ORIGINS, BUT THERE ARE REPORTS MATCHING HIS DESCRIPTION AND MO GOING **WAAAAY** BACK TO THE FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY IN LONDON.

WHETHER OR NOT THIS IS ACTUALLY THE **SAME MAN** MAY SEEM DOUBTFUL, BUT THEN AGAIN, HE IS SOME SORT OF ZOMBIE, OR UNDEAD GHOUL, OR SOMETHING, SO...

WHAT WE DO KNOW IS THAT SHERLOCK WAS ATTACKING SPIRAL CITY AND ITS HEROES-- ESPECIALLY GOLDEN GAIL AND THE GOLDEN FAMILY-- AS FAR BACK AS THE NINETEEN FORTIES.

IN THE EARLY SEVENTIES HE WENT LEGIT.

OR AT LEAST ON PAPER HE DID.

HE STARTED ***FRANKENLOCK WORLDWIDE.***

AND USED HIS GENIUS TO INVENT AND SUPPLY WEAPONS TO THE U.S. MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX FOR DECADES.

BUT IT WAS ALL A FRONT.

STOP

BEHIND THE SCENES HE WAS AS BAD AS EVER AND WENT UP AGAINST MY DAD AND THE OTHER HEROES A NUMBER OF TIMES RIGHT THROUGH THE EIGHTIES.

SAY WHAT YOU WANT ABOUT HIM, HE IS WITHOUT A DOUBT ONE OF THE SMARTEST MEN (IF YOU CAN STILL CALL HIM THAT) IN THE WORLD.

SO THERE'S NO BETTER PLACE TO START LOOKING FOR CLUES ABOUT WHERE MY DAD AND THE OTHER HEROES WENT THAN TO QUESTION SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN.

ONLY ONE PROBLEM.

VRRRMMM

NO ONE KNOWS WHERE HE IS NOW.

NO ONE HAS SEEN OR HEARD FROM SHERLOCK IN YEARS.

WHICH IS WHAT BRINGS ME HERE...

...SPIRAL ASYLUM FOR THE CRIMINALLY INSANE.

THE LAST TIME ANYONE SAW HIM IT WAS HERE, AS AN INMATE IN 1983...

SO THIS IS WHERE THE HUNT FOR SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN BEGINS.

MS. WEBER, YOU SHOULD HAVE AN UMBRELLA!

HURRY, COME IN OUT OF THAT RAIN.

THANK YOU, WARDEN WING.

AND THANKS AGAIN FOR SEEING ME ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE!

I HAVE TO SAY, IT'S QUITE AN HONOR MEETING THE GREAT "WINGMAN"!

I THINK YOU WERE ALREADY RETIRED WHEN MY DAD WAS ACTIVE AS BLACK HAMMER...

...BUT I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOUR ADVENTURES WITH THE LIBERTY SQUADRON...

...AND I KNOW MY DAD REALLY RESPECTED YOU.

scanning...
CLEAR

HA!

YOU'RE TOO YOUNG TO KNOW ABOUT THE LIBERTY SQUADRON, AREN'T YOU, MS. WEBER?

ARE YOU KIDDING...

"...I'VE READ EVERY ACCOUNT OF YOUR ADVENTURES IN EUROPE DURING THE WAR."

YOU ARE TOO KIND, MS. WEBER.

BUT THOSE DAYS ARE LONG BEHIND ME.

THESE DAYS I'M HAPPY TO BE THE WARDEN HERE.

TO HELP KEEP AS MANY OF THESE SUPER CREEPS BEHIND BARS AS I CAN.

AND I HAVE TO SAY, WE DON'T LET **JUST ANYBODY** PAST THE FRONT GATES.

I KNOW, AND I DO APPRECIATE IT, WARDEN.

REALLY.

ANYTHING FOR JOE WEBER'S GIRL.

BESIDES, THIS FACILITY IS PRIVATELY OWNED, SO WE CAN SORT OF MAKE OUR OWN RULES AROUND HERE.

CLACK!

THE CONCRETESTADOR!

WOW!

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WORKED HERE TOO!

HAVING SAID ALL OF THAT, I AM STILL NOT COMFORTABLE WITH YOU SEEING THE PRISONER ALONE. I'M GOING TO HAVE MY BEST **MAN** ACCOMPANY YOU, JUST IN CASE.

MS. WEBER, MEET--

I DON'T GO BY THAT NAME ANYMORE.

YOU CAN CALL ME OFFICER LOPEZ.

CLACKITTY-CLACK!!!

OH, UM, SORRY...

SURE.

YOU KNOW, I THINK I ACTUALLY MET YOU ONCE WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL...

...IT WAS AT ONE OF ABRAHAM SLAM'S NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTIES, I THINK.

HUMPH!

I DON'T REMEMBER THAT.

ANYWAY, LET'S JUST GET GOING.

THE INMATES HAVE JUST BEEN FED.

IN MY EXPERIENCE THEY ARE LESS...VOLATILE RIGHT AFTER A MEAL.

UH, OKAY ... SURE.

MOST OF THE BAD GUYS RETIRED JUST LIKE US AFTER YOUR DAD AND THE OTHER HEROES DIED IN THE CATACLYSM.

BUT THIS PLACE STILL HOLDS MOST OF THE ONES THAT ARE JUST TOO DANGEROUS TO BE ALLOWED TO ROAM FREE.

DISAPPEARED.

HUH?

MY DAD DISAPPEARED.

HE DIDN'T DIE.

UH, SURE. WHATEVER YOU SAY.

ANYWAY, HERE WE ARE.

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN EMPLOYED A LOT OF FLUNKIES OVER THE YEARS.

HE DIDN'T ALWAYS DO HIS DIRTY WORK HIMSELF.

ONE OF THOSE HENCHMEN STANDS OUT AMONG THE OTHERS IN THAT HE HAD HAD A PROLIFIC SOLO CAREER AS WELL...

-GASP-

K-CLAK

I'LL BE OKAY.

...OFFICER LOPEZ.

THANKS, CONCR--UH...

GOT IT.

...HE CAN'T TOUCH YOU.

...IF YOU JUST STAY BACK FROM THE LINE...

DON'T WORRY...

I'LL BE HERE IF YOU NEED ME.

...EUGENE TREMBLAY, AKA **MECTOPLASM.**

BEING A SUPERHERO'S DAUGHTER YOU SEE A LOT OF WEIRD STUFF, BUT EVEN SO IT TAKES EVERY BIT OF WILLPOWER I HAVE NOT TO PEE MYSELF.

H--HELLO, EUGENE.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

EASY, LUCE...EASY.

JUST DO YOUR JOB.

I CAME TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS.

WOULD-- WOULD THAT BE ALL RIGHT?

I GUESS SO.

DON'T HAVE MUCH TO SAY THOUGH.

BUT HE DOES.

I KNOW HE DOES.

MY DAD ALONE FOUGHT MECTOPLASM AT LEAST THREE TIMES.

HE ALSO WENT UP AGAINST MADAME DRAGONFLY AND ABRAHAM SLAM ON SEVERAL SEPARATE OCCASIONS.

BUT THAT'S NOT WHY I'M HERE.

NEED TO FOCUS.

I ACTUALLY WANT TO ASK YOU ABOUT SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN.

HE-- HE MADE YOU, RIGHT?

SHEERR-LOCK?!!

SWOS

HOW DARE YOU TALK TO ME ABOUT HIM!!

I--I'M SORRY.

I KNOW IT MUST BE PAINFUL TO TALK ABOUT THAT.

I JUST--I'M TRYING TO FIND MY FATHER. AND I THINK IF I CAN FIND SHERLOCK, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET SOME CLUES AS TO WHERE HE WENT.

I DON'T TELL HIM MY FATHER WAS ONE OF HIS ARCHENEMIES, HOPING A LITTLE LIE OF OMISSION WILL HELP MY CAUSE.

DID--DID SHERLOCK HURT YOUR DADDY?

I DON'T KNOW.

BUT I'M HOPING TO FIND OUT.

WELL, I HAVEN'T SEEN SHERLOCK IN A LONG, LONG TIME.

I TELL YOU, IF I DID, IT WOULD BE THE END OF HIM.

HE--HE WAS THE ONE WHO CAPTURED ME.

TURNED ME INTO THIS--THIS MONSTER.

I READ ABOUT THAT.

YOU CLAIM THAT YOU WERE--YOU WERE DEAD AND HE BROUGHT YOU BACK?

MAYBE IF YOU CAN EXPLAIN.

WHAT DOES WHAT HAPPENED TO ME HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR DADDY?

MAYBE NOTHING.

BUT ANY DETAIL COULD BE A CLUE.

PLEASE.

I DON'T REMEMBER MUCH ABOUT WHO I WAS.

I KNOW I WASN'T VERY OLD.

I REMEMBER BEING A KID.

PLAYING.

I REMEMBER MY MOM AND DAD.

THEN THERE WAS SOME KIND OF ACCIDENT.

I REMEMBER THAT IT HURT REAL BAD...

...AND THEN IT WAS DARK.

...JUST DARK.

THEN THERE WAS LIGHT AND MORE PAIN.

LOTS MORE PAIN.

AND I WOKE UP IN THIS CAGE.

AND SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN WAS THERE.

HE'S THE ONE WHO DID IT.

PULLED ME FROM THE DARKNESS.

TRAPPED ME IN THIS METAL BODY.

YOU-- YOU WERE JUST A CHILD WHEN YOU DIED!

JUST A BOY!

DON'T KNOW.

I THINK SO.

LIKE I SAID, I DON'T REMEMBER MUCH.

BUT AFTER HE BROUGHT ME BACK AND TRAPPED ME IN THIS BODY, SHERLOCK **MADE ME DO** LOTS OF BAD STUFF.

BUT I LEARNED HOW TO RESIST HIM AND I RAN AWAY. HE TRIED TO CONVINCE ME TO JOIN HIM AGAIN A FEW TIMES. BUT--

EVENTUALLY I GOT CAUGHT. LOCKED DOWN HERE. AND, IT'S LIKE I SAID, I HAVEN'T SEEN SHERLOCK SINCE.

I SEE.

I'M SORRY TO MAKE YOU THINK ABOUT THESE THINGS, EUGENE.

BUT CAN I ASK ONE LAST QUESTION?

THE FILES I HAVE SAY YOU'VE BEEN IN SPIRAL ASYLUM FOR EIGHT YEARS NOW.

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN IT WAS YOU SAW SHERLOCK LAST?

HOW LONG AGO BEFORE YOU CAME HERE?

UM...IT WAS RIGHT BEFORE ALL THAT CRAZY STUFF HAPPENED. YOU KNOW, WHEN THAT BIG SCARY GUY--ANTI-GOD--CAME AND ALL THE GOOD GUYS FOUGHT HIM.

RIGHT BEFORE THE CATA-CLYSM?

YOU'RE SURE?

NOT AFTER-WARD?

I'M SURE.

SORRY I COULDN'T HELP MORE.

IT'S OKAY.

YOU DID YOUR BEST.

I REALLY APPRE-CIATE IT.

UM...MISS?

YES?

IF WARDEN WING ASKS, CAN YOU SAY THAT I WAS FRIENDLY?

CAN YOU TELL HIM I BEHAVED?

IF YOU DO HE MIGHT LET ME HAVE MY TV BACK.

I'LL TELL HIM, EUGENE.

I PROMISE.

--TKTKTKTKTKTKTK--

WELL, DID YOU GET WHAT YOU CAME FOR?

NO.

NOT REALLY.

SECURITY

WELL, YOU CAN'T EXPECT MUCH FROM THESE CREEPS.

THEY ARE THE SCUM OF THE EARTH, AFTER ALL.

RIGHT.

PSST!

HEY, PRETTY LADY, WANNA HEAR A STORY?

WHA--?

I SAID, DO YOU WANT TO HEAR A STORY?

I GOT A GOOD ONE FOR YOU...

SIT BACK AND SHUT UP, GRIMJIM, OR YOU'RE GOING IN THE HOLE AGAIN!

WHAM

TSK.

YOU'RE NO FUN, CONCRETESTADOR.

I TOLD YOU I HAVE A SPECIAL STORY JUST FOR THE LADY.

A STORY ABOUT SHERLOCK FRANKEN-STEIN.

I SAID SHUT IT!

NO, WAIT!

DO NOT LISTEN TO HIM, MS. WEBER.

EVERY WORD THAT COMES OUT OF GRIMJIM'S MOUTH IS A LIE.

SECURITY

WHY DON'T YOU LET ME BE THE JUDGE OF THAT?

YEAH, LOPEZ. LIGHTEN UP. THE LADY CAN THINK FOR HERSELF.

SHE CAME HERE ASKING ABOUT SHERLOCK, AFTER ALL, AND I KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE SUBJECT.

HOW DO YOU KNOW I CAME HERE ABOUT SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN?

SUPERSENSES, HONEY.

I HEARD YOUR LITTLE CONVO WITH BABY EUGENE IN THERE.

I'VE READ YOUR FILE, GRIMJIM.

YOU HAD NO AFFILIATION WITH SHERLOCK.

SO HOW DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING?

DON'T YOU GET IT, MS. REPORTER? I WAS THERE.

THERE?

THERE WHERE?

THE CATACLYSM...THE BIG POW-WOW BETWEEN THE SUPER-GOOFS AND ANTI-GOD. I WAS THERE...

"...EVERYONE WAS SO BUSY WORRYING ABOUT ANTI-GOD THAT MY BOYS AND I DECIDED TO HAVE US A LITTLE PARTY.

"BUT THEN EVERYTHING STARTED SHAKING.

"WE THOUGHT THE WORLD WAS ENDING AT FIRST, UNTIL I LOOKED UP AND SAW HIM...

"SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN!

"THE CRAZY OLD BASTARD WAS HEADED RIGHT TOWARD IT."

I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

HE'S NOT SAYING ANYTHING.

I TOLD YOU IT'S ALL LIES.

TUMP

OH, IT'S NO LIE.

SHERLOCK WAS A MAN ON A MISSION, ALL RIGHT.

HE WAS HEADING STRAIGHT TOWARD THE HEROES AND ANTI-GOD.

THUMP!

WHAT?!

DID--DID HE ATTACK THEM?

I DON'T KNOW.

THE LAST THING I SAW WAS SHERLOCK APPROACHING THE FIGHT, THEN BLACK HAMMER LAID INTO ANTI-GOD AND THERE WAS A FLASH OF LIGHT.
THEN THEY WERE ALL GONE.

DON'T YOU SEE? HE WAS THERE WHEN THE HEROES DISAPPEARED.

"SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN WENT WHEREVER THEY WENT!"

LOUIS
DAVID
RUBIN

SPIRAL CITY.

THIRTEEN YEARS AGO.

IT'S BEEN BACKED UP ALL WEEK!

CLANG!

drip drip drip

I THOUGHT IT WOULD WORK ITSELF OUT, BUT...

UH HUH.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED!

I HAVEN'T TRIED TO STICK ANYTHING WEIRD DOWN THERE OR NOTHING.

I DID GIVE JACKIE A BATH, BUT...

drip

UH HUH.

SUCK!

UNGH...

GURGLE

LOUIS

UH, DID YOU SAY SOMETHING, MS. POTTER?

I SAID, I GAVE JACKIE HERE A BATH.

SHE'S A SHEDDER.

MAYBE IT'S HER HAIR.

NO, I MEAN AFTER THAT?

DID YOU SAY SOMETHING ELSE?

NO.

NOW, ARE YOU ALMOST DONE THERE, MR. KAMINSKI?

I AM PAYING BY THE HOUR.

LOUIS

YEAH, ALMOST DONE.

-YAWN-

ZOOP!

?

CRASH

THE FUCK?
SEWERS
JESUS CHRIST!
STOP!
STOP!
JUST STOP SAYING MY NAME!!
K-CRAK

CTHU-LOU!

PART TWO:

THE CALL OF CTHU-LOU!

MMMMMMMM

CHOOF!

OH DEAR GOD!

WHAT-- WHAT ARE YOU?

DO NOT TRY TO TALK TO THE GREAT OLD ONE.

HIS IS NOT A LANGUAGE FOR HUMAN EARS.

THIS-- THIS ISN'T HAPPENING!

OF COURSE IT IS, LOUIS KAMINSKI.

THE MANY-ANGLED ONE HAS CALLED YOU FORTH.

HE IS IN NEED OF A NEW EMISSARY HERE ON EARTH.

HE NEEDS A NEW LOU AND THAT LOU IS YOU.

LOU

FUCK THIS SHIT, MAN!

LOVIS

ORGULOUS

NNGH!!

SMAH

NO!

NO PLEASE!!!

ORGULOUS

BRAKKA!!

BRAKKA!!

LOU!

DO YOU KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS?!

ORR-GUU--

BRAKKA!!

BRAKKA!!

ARE YOU **DRUNK AGAIN,** LOUIS KAMINSKI?!

XOTH--ORRGUUU--LOU--

WHAT?!

BRAKKA!!

BRAKKA!!

SAW THE STARS--SAW--SAW THE STARS AND EVERYTHING INSIDE OF THEM--

--IN MY HEAD---

YOU ARE TALKING COMPLETE FLIM-FLAM, LOU!

HOW MUCH DID YOU DRINK?!

BRAKKA!

I TOLD YOU! I **TOLD YOU,** LOU! YOU FALL OFF THE WAGON AGAIN AND YOU ARE OUT OF HERE!

MRRF---RRRMM---MFF!!

DO NOT VOMIT ON MY LINOLEUM, MISTER!

BRAKKA!!

CR E-CREACK!

AND THAT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,
IS THE UNLIKELY STORY OF CTHU-LOU...

A MILD-MANNERED PLUMBER BECOMES THE EMISSARY OF A COSMIC GOD THAT LIVES IN THE SEWERS.

THEN AGAIN...

...I'VE HEARD CRAZIER STORIES LATELY, SO WHO AM I TO JUDGE?

SPIRAL CITY.

NOW.

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN, SPIRAL CITY'S GREATEST SUPER VILLAIN, IS MISSING.

I NOW HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT HIS DISAPPEARANCE MAY BE TIED TO THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MY FATHER, BLACK HAMMER, AND HIS SUPERHERO ALLIES IN THE WAKE OF THE CATACLYSM.

THE MANIAC KNOWN AS GRIMJIM SAYS HE SAW SHERLOCK HEADED TOWARDS THE HEROES IN THE MOMENTS BEFORE THEY VANISHED, AS THEY FOUGHT ANTI-GOD.

SO HERE I AM...

...TRACKING ALL THE OTHER LIVING SUPER VILLAINS OF THAT PERIOD, TRYING TO FIND SOME LEAD THAT WILL BRING ME TO SHERLOCK...

PNGBOW

...AND ULTIMATELY, TO MY DAD...

Creeak-

UH, HELLO?

I'M LUCY WEBER.

I CALLED ABOUT AN INTERVIEW?

GET AWAY FROM THERE!

SLAM

WHAT HAVE I TOLD YOU ABOUT ANSWERING THAT DOOR!?

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT!

GO!

GO TO YOUR ROOM!

CREEEEEKKKK

AH, SORRY ABOUT THAT, MS. WEBER. **ELAINE KAMINSKI.** WE SPOKE ON THE PHONE.

UH, YES.

HELLO, MRS. KAMINSKI.

I HOPE I'M NOT TOO LATE? THE L TRAIN WAS RUNNING BEHIND.

NO. IT'S FINE.

DID YOU, UM, DID YOU BRING WHAT WE DISCUSSED?

I DID...

LIKE I SAID, IT'S NOT MUCH. THE GLOBAL PLANET HAS A POLICY OF NOT PAYING FOR INTERVIEWS, BUT SINCE I AM HERE ON A PERSONAL ASSIGNMENT--

TWO HUNDRED?

YES. AS WE AGREED.

I THOUGHT WE SAID THREE HUNDRED?

UH, NO.

IT WAS TWO.

REALLY THAT'S ALL I CAN AFFORD. I'M JUST OUT OF JOURNALISM SCHOOL.

THAT'S A CHUNK OF MY RENT MONEY FOR THIS MONTH.

-:SIGH:-
FINE.
ALL RIGHT.
BEGGARS CAN'T BE CHOOSERS.
BUT YOU ONLY GET A HALF-HOUR WITH HIM.
WELL, HERE HE IS.
YOU'RE TELLING ME, HONEY.
creak!
MY HUSBAND.
!
UM, HELLO, MR. KAMINSKI.
HEY. WHAT'S UP?

SO, MR. KAMINSKI, AS I TOLD YOUR WIFE ON THE PHONE, I WAS HOPING TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT YOUR PAST AS **CTHU-LOU** AND ALSO ABOUT ANY DEALING YOU MAY HAVE HAD WITH **SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN.**

AND I TOLD HER TO TELL YOU, I **DON'T KNOW MUCH** ABOUT SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN.

NEVER EVEN MET HIM.

I KNOW, BUT I'D STILL LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS.

YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT LITTLE THINGS MAY END UP BEING CLUES.

SURE, SURE.

SO, YOU'RE REALLY BLACK HAMMER'S DAUGHTER?

YES.

HUH.

CRAZY WORLD.

WHAT'S THAT FOR?

OH, IT'S JUST FOR TAKING NOTES.

YOU NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT RECORDING THIS.

IT'S FINE.

LIKE HELL IT IS.

ELAINE, WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A WALK, HUH?

I AIN'T GOING NOWHERE, LOU!

ELAINE!!!

HUMPH!

FINE.

AIN'T LIKE I DON'T GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO ANYHOW.

SORRY.
SO WHERE DO YOU WANT TO START?
DON'T BE IT'S FINE.
WELL, I READ ALL ABOUT YOUR, UM, ORIGINS. BUT I WAS A BIT CONFUSED.
THERE WAS ANOTHER CTHU-LOU BEFORE YOU, RIGHT?
PPSSS
WAS THERE SOME CONNECTION BETWEEN YOU TWO OR--
NAH, THE FIRST CTHU-LOU WAS SOME UNIVERSITY EGGHEAD WHO EXPERIMENTED ON HIMSELF OR SOMETHING.
HE FOUGHT ABE SLAM A LOT IN THE SEVENTIES.
I NEVER MET THAT OTHER GUY.
HE DIED IN PRISON, SO THE MASTER HAD TO REPLACE HIM.
THAT'S WHERE I CAME IN.
RIGHT.
AND YOU WERE ACTIVE AS A SUPER VILLAIN FOR ABOUT SEVEN YEARS....
...MOSTLY THEFT.
IT SEEMS YOU NEVER HURT ANYONE.
YOU WENT UP AGAINST MY DAD A FEW TIMES?
YEAH, BUT THAT WASN'T REALLY ME. I MEAN, THE DARK LORD WAS THE ONE TELLING ME TO DO ALL OF THAT STUFF. I DIDN'T REALLY WANNA BE A BAD GUY, YOU KNOW?

I JUST WASN'T CUT OUT FOR IT. THAT'S WHY I TRIED NOT TO HURT NO ONE ON MY CAPERS... I JUST AIN'T GOT THE HEART FOR THE VILLAIN THING.

-:AHEM:-

FLIP!!

BETWEEN YOU AND ME, I THINK MY WIFE WISHES I WERE A BIT MORE --AMBITIOUS-- BUT...

AND THIS "MASTER" OF YOURS.

WHAT DID HE HAVE TO SAY ABOUT YOUR EARLY RETIREMENT?

WHAT'S HE GOT TO SAY? HE SAYS "*ORRRGGUUUU-LOUUUUUU--*" AND SHIT LIKE THAT.

EXCUSE ME?

THAT'S HOW HE TALKS. I HEAR HIM IN MY HEAD ALL THE TIME, BUT I PRETTY MUCH LEARNED TO IGNORE HIM.

I MEAN, HE ALREADY TURNED ME INTO A GODDAMN OCTOPUS HEAD. WHAT ELSE IS HE GONNA DO TO ME?

GOTTA SAY THOUGH, IT'S BEEN PRETTY HARD MAKING ENDS MEET. NO ONE WANTS TO HIRE A PLUMBER THAT LOOKS LIKE CALAMARI, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

BUT IT DON'T MATTER NOW. THOSE DAYS ARE OVER. I RETIRED RIGHT BEFORE THE CATACLYSM. SO, LIKE I SAID, I HAD NO PART IN WHAT SHERLOCK WAS PLANNING.

PLANNING?

HUH?

YOU SAID, "WHAT SHERLOCK WAS PLANNING." WHAT DID YOU MEAN BY THAT?

AH, I DON'T KNOW. I HEARD THAT HE CALLED A MEETING WHEN THAT ANTI-GOD GUY SHOWED UP AND STARTED DESTROYING EVERYTHING.

A MEETING? WHAT KIND OF MEETING, MR. KAMINSKI? PLEASE, THIS COULD BE VERY IMPORTANT.

HONESTLY, I DON'T KNOW MUCH.

LIKE I SAID, I HAD ALL BUT RETIRED BY THEN, AND EVEN IF I HADN'T, I DOUBT I WOULD HAVE GOTTEN AN INVITE.

I ONLY HEARD ABOUT IT LATER FROM METAL MINOTAUR WHO WAS THERE WITH A FEW OTHERS.

AND WHAT HAPPENED? WAS SHERLOCK PLANNING SOME KIND OF ATTACK ON THE HEROES WHILE THEY WERE ALREADY PRE-OCCUPIED WITH ANTI-GOD?

I DON'T KNOW. HONESTLY. METAL MINOTAUR DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT IT.

I'M REALLY SORRY, MS. WEBER...

...I WISH I COULD BE OF MORE HELP.

IT'S-- IT'S ALL RIGHT.

YOU'VE GIVEN ME SOMETHING ELSE TO WORK ON.

CLAC!

THANK YOU AGAIN, MR. KAMINSKI.

CALL ME LOU.

AND REALLY, IT WAS NO BOTHER.

OH!

creeeaak

WHAT ARE YOU DOING SKULKING AROUND OUT THERE? COME ON IN IF YOU WANNA. DON'T MAKE NO DIFFERENCE.

WELL, HELLO THERE.

HI.

THIS IS MY LITTLE GIRL, LOUISE.

I LIKE CTHU-LOUISE BETTER.

HELLO, CTHU-LOUISE.

MY NAME IS LUCY.

SO, ARE YOU TALKING TO MY DAD 'CAUSE HE WAS A **SUPER VILLAIN?**

YEP.

AND YOU KNOW WHAT?

MY DAD USED TO BE A **SUPERHERO.**

MAYBE THAT MEANS WE'RE GONNA BE ARCHENEMIES ONE DAY.

HEH.

MAYBE.

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO STAY IN YOUR ROOM, YOUNG LADY!

BUT, MOM--

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT! YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE OUT OF YOUR ROOM WHEN THERE'S ANYONE HERE!

IT'S OKAY, REALLY MRS. KAMINSKI--

EXCUSE ME, BUT I'LL DECIDE WHAT'S OKAY IN MY HOME, MS. WEBER!

ELAINEEE!!!

SHUT IT, LOU!

NOW, YOUR HALF HOUR IS UP, MS. WEBER.

I THINK YOU SHOULD BE GOING.

UM... RIGHT. OKAY.

THANKS AGAIN.

ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT ON THE WAY BACK DOWNTOWN IS POOR LOUISE.

I KNOW I SHOULD BE THINKING ABOUT SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN AND EVERYTHING THAT CTHU-LOU TOLD ME ABOUT HIS SECRET MEETING, BUT--

SOMETHING ABOUT THAT LITTLE GIRL, AND THE WAY HER MOM TREATED HER.

MAKES ME EVEN MORE THANKFUL I HAD THE PARENTS I DID.

MAKES ME WANT TO FIND MY DAD EVEN MORE.

SO, I HEAD BACK TO THE HALL OF HAMMER TO REGROUP.

METAL MINOTAUR WAS AT SHERLOCK'S MEETING.

SO FINDING MINOTAUR HAS TO BE MY NEXT MOVE.

I JUST START TO FORMULATE A PLAN WHEN I NOTICE IT...

THE DOOR TO MY FATHER'S SANCTUARY... IT'S ALREADY BEEN OPENED!

THE JOURNALIST IN ME IMMEDIATELY STARTS ASKING QUESTIONS...

WHO WOULD DO THIS?

HOW DID ANYONE ELSE KNOW THE HALL OF HAMMER WAS HERE?

AND HOW DID THEY GET PAST SECURITY AND GET INSIDE?

NO!!

BUT IN ALL THE EXCITEMENT, I FORGET TO ASK **THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION...**

CREAK

...I FORGET TO ASK...ARE THEY STILL HERE?

GKK!

FUR!!!

YOU MADE A BIG MISTAKE, GIRLIE...

...YOU NEVER SHOULD HAVE STARTED LOOKING FOR SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN.

UH OH.

DAVID
RUBIN

AHHHH

MOM?

HHHHH

MOMMY?

AHHHH

ANYBODY HOME?

SSSAHHHHHH

1 2 3 4

1 2 3 4

YOU'LL NEVER LEARN WILL YOU, METAL MINOTAUR?

OH, I'VE LEARNED PLENTY. EVERY TIME WE FIGHT, I IMPROVE MY ARMOR.

DADDY!

NOW IT'S EVEN STRONGER THAN YOU, BLACK HAMMER!

UGH!

DADDY! NO!

L--LUCY?

LUCY-- SHOULDN'T YOU BE IN BED?

I--WELL, YEAH.

BUT DAD, HOW ARE YOU TALKING TO ME?!

BECAUSE, SWEETIE, THIS IS NOT REALLY HAPPENING.

I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND?

YOU WILL.

EVENTUALLY.

BUT FIRST YOU NEED TO FIND SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN.

SHERLOCK?

DAD, WHAT IS GOING ON?

YOU'RE ASLEEP!

YOU NEED TO WAKE UP!

WAKE UP!

UGH...

THE HELL?

SOMEONE WAS HERE!

SOMEONE BROKE INTO THE HALL OF HAMMER AND ATTACKED ME!

LONG GONE NOW.

WHICH MEANS, WHOEVER IT WAS, IT WAS MEANT AS A WARNING.

SOMEBODY WANTS ME TO STOP LOOKING FOR SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN.

WELL, SOMEBODY CAN GO TO HELL.

THERE IS NO WAY I'M STOPPING NOW.

CLIC!

CTHU-LOU TOLD ME SHERLOCK FRANK HELD A SECRET MEETING FOR SUPER VILLAINS AS THE CATACLYSM HIT.

HE WAS PLANNING SOMETHING.

CLAC!

MAYBE HE WANTED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CHAOS ANTI-GOD WAS CREATING AND LAUNCH A SIDE ATTACK ON MY DAD AND THE OTHER HEROES?

MAYBE THAT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THEIR DISAPPEARANCE?

TAP

MAYBE.

CLANG

MAYBE, MAYBE, BABY.

ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT FOR SURE.

I NEED TO FIND THE METAL MINOTAUR.

MINOTAUR WAS ONE OF MY DAD'S ARCHVILLAINS.

AND MINOTAUR WAS AT SHERLOCK'S SECRET MEETING.

LUCKILY I STILL HAVE ALL MY DAD'S OLD FILES AND I KNOW WHERE TO START LOOKING...

PART THREE:

WHO IS THE METAL MINOTAUR?

MY DAD WAS UNCHARACTERISTICALLY VAGUE ABOUT MINOTAUR'S REAL IDENTITY.

THE ONLY NAME I HAVE IN THE FILE IS A "N. PARKER" AND THE ADDRESS OF THIS LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY IN THE EAST END.

HONESTLY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT HERE.

SEEMS LIKE A STRANGE PLACE FOR A HULKING SUPER VILLAIN TO END UP.

UM, HELLO. I WAS WONDERING IF YOU HAD A PATIENT WITH THE LAST NAME PARKER HERE?

PARKER?

HMM... ...LET ME SEE...

t-CLICK t-CLICK t-CLACK

Admissions List

Filter By

Patient RefNo

Select Patient

Consultant Name

PARKER, N

Admissions List

Patient ID	Father/Husband Name		Room
PAT-1		PARKER	314
PAT-188		PERKER	216
PAT-		KER	327
PA		ER	622
PAT-185		ETIER	139
PAT-184	ELVIRA	POTTER	205
PAT-183	VICTOR	PUCHALSKI	321

ROOM 314.

BUT IT'S AFTER VISITING HOURS, HON.

OH. WELL, I'M FROM THE GLOBAL PLANET. I'M DOING A STORY AND I REALLY NEED TO TALK TO MR. PARKER. IT'S URGENT; THE STORY NEEDS TO GO TO PRESS BY MIDNIGHT.

I PROMISE I WON'T BOTHER HIM IF HE'S ALREADY ASLEEP.

WELL... OKAY.

BUT PROMISE ME YOU WON'T WAKE ANY OTHER PATIENTS.

I WON'T. THANKS!

OH, AND ONE MORE THING, HON...

IT'S NOT MISTER PARKER IN ROOM 314...IT'S MISS PARKER.

MISS PARKER?

314

313

THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT, CAN IT?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M MORE FREAKED OUT ABOUT, THE FACT THAT I MAY HAVE THE WRONG PERSON, OR THAT I LIED ABOUT MY CREDENTIALS.

317

326

THE GLOBAL PLANET?

I WISH.

THEN AGAIN, WHO KNOWS, MAYBE ONE DAY.

UM... MS. PARKER?

YEAH?

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

YOU'RE NOT ANOTHER NEW NURSE, ARE YOU?

NO.

I'M REALLY SORRY TO BOTHER YOU.

I ACTUALLY THINK THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME KIND OF MIX-UP.

BUT, UM, I'M A REPORTER AND I'M TRYING TO DO A STORY ON RETIRED SUPER VILLAINS.

I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE METAL MINOTAUR?

314

HORROR

A REPORTER, HUH? YOU CAN'T BE MORE THAN NINETEEN, HONEY.

AND IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE A REPORTER YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO LEARN TO LIE A LOT BETTER THAN THAT.

SO YOU REALLY WANNA KNOW ABOUT MINOTAUR, WHY DON'T YOU TRY THAT AGAIN, BUT THIS TIME THE TRUTH.

OKAY.

UM,..

MY NAME IS LUCY WEBER. MY DAD WAS--

BLACK HAMMER!

HOW DID--

HOW DID YOU KNOW?

I KNOW A LOT OF THINGS, KID...

I'M THE METAL MINOTAUR.

OR AT LEAST I WAS.

LOOK, THERE'S AN ELEVATOR THAT LEADS TO THE ROOF...

--I REALLY NEED A SMOKE.

SO...

SO HOW DO I KNOW YOUR NAME AND YOUR DAD'S SECRET IDENTITY?

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, HE TOLD ME.

AND YOU WERE MINOTAUR? EXCUSE ME, I DON'T MEAN TO BE RUDE, BUT--

BUT YOU DON'T BELIEVE A WORD I'M SAYING?

WHY WOULD YOUR DAD TELL ME ANYTHING AND HOW WAS A CRIPPLE A SUPER VILLAIN?

WELL, I WASN'T ALWAYS LIKE THIS.

THERE WAS A TIME, I COULD WALK AND I COULD BUILD JUST ABOUT ANYTHING I PUT MY MIND TO.

AND IT JUST SO HAPPENED WHAT I CHOSE TO BUILD WAS A MASSIVE SUIT OF BATTLE ARMOR.

TZKKK!

PFF!

WHAT CAN I SAY?

PFF!

IT WAS THE SEVENTIES.

TIMES WERE DIFFERENT THEN...

PFF!!

THE WORLD FELT LIKE IT WAS YOURS FOR THE TAKING.

AND SO THAT'S WHAT I TRIED TO DO.

TAKE IT ALL.

OF COURSE YOUR DAD AND HIS PALS HAD DIFFERENT IDEAS.

BUT I JUST KEPT BUILDING BETTER ARMOR.

AND EACH TIME YOUR DAD WAS THERE TO STOP ME.

GUESS I ALWAYS WAS A BIT HARD-HEADED, CAUSE I DIDN'T LEARN MY LESSON.

UNTIL FINALLY I WENT TOO FAR...

ZZZ KKKKKZZ

MY LAST SUIT OF ARMOR WAS A DOOZY.

I WAS SURE I WOULD FINALLY BEAT YOUR POPS WITH IT.

BUT IT WAS TOO POWERFUL.

I WAS HOOKED RIGHT UP TO IT, LIKE AN EXOSKELETON, AND I DIDN'T ACCOUNT FOR THE SHIFTS OF MASS THE ARMOR WOULD TAKE WHEN IT STARTED MOVING.

AAARGHH

SMASH

I BROKE MY OWN BACK JUST WALKING IN THE THING.

I NEVER... I NEVER GOT TO SEE IF IT WAS TOUGHER THAN YOUR DAD.

OH GOD. I'M-- I'M SO SORRY.

WE REAP WHAT WE SOW, KID.

WHICH IS WHY I'M NOT SURPRISED YOU'RE SUCH A GOOD KID. YOUR DADDY WAS A DAMN GOOD MAN.

BUT YOU FOUGHT HIM ALL THE TIME.

TRIED TO KILL HIM.

HOW CAN--

BECAUSE HE SAVED MY LIFE.

HOLD ON!

I-- HELP ME-- I--I CAN'T FEEL MY LEGS.

HE GOT ME OUT OF THAT THAT TIN CAN AND BROUGHT ME TO NEW WORLD, THAT PLANET WHERE HIS POWERS CAME FROM, AS FAST AS HE COULD.

HELP!

I NEED HELP!

THOSE PEOPLE THERE...STARLOK AND THE LIGHTRIDERS, THEY USED CRAZY MEDICINE AND MAGIC TO FIX MY BACK AS MUCH AS THEY COULD.

I KNEW I'D NEVER WALK AGAIN, BUT IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE.

IF YOUR DAD HADN'T RUSHED ME AWAY I WOULD HAVE DIED.

THE WHOLE TIME I WAS THERE HE VISITED, KEPT ME COMPANY. HE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT YOU.

BOY, WAS HE PROUD OF YOU.

ME AND YOUR DAD WERE AT EACH OTHERS' THROATS DOZENS OF TIMES OVER THE YEARS, BUT I TELL YOU WHAT--AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE RESPECTED EACH OTHER, TOO.

WAIT A MINUTE. THERE'S ONE THING I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

I JUST TALKED TO CTHU-LOU AND HE TOLD ME YOU WERE AT A SECRET MEETING THAT SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN CALLED DURING THE CATACLYSM.

BUT HOW COULD YOU HAVE BEEN THERE IF YOU WERE--

CRIPPLED AND RETIRED FROM BEING A BAD GUY?

WELL... YEAH.

I COULD STILL WALK USING SOME OF MY OLDER ARMOR.

WHEN WE GOT WORD OF SHERLOCK'S MEETING I HAD MANACONDA HELP ME GET INTO IT.

ONE LAST MISSION.

BUT MY DAD HELPED YOU. AND THE WAY YOU TELL IT, YOU HAD REFORMED AFTER YOUR ACCIDENT. HE EVEN TRUSTED YOU WITH MY IDENTITY.

SO WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO HELP SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN ATTACK MY DAD AND HIS FRIENDS WHEN THEY WERE AT THEIR MOST VULNERABLE?

ATTACK THEM?!

IS-- IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK SHERLOCK WAS PLANNING AT THAT MEETING?

SHERLOCK DIDN'T CALL THAT MEETING TO PLAN AN ATTACK ON THE SUPERHEROES...

--HE WANTED US ALL TO GO HELP THEM.

HELP THEM?

WHY IN HELL WOULD THEIR GREATEST ENEMY WANT TO HELP THEM?

I DON'T REALLY KNOW.

BUT HE DID.

WE WERE ALL DEBATING WHETHER OR NOT TO JOIN THEM IN THE FIGHT WITH ANTI-GOD. I WAS IN, OF COURSE. SOME OTHERS ARGUED AGAINST IT. BUT WE NEVER GOT A CHANCE...

AS WE ARGUED, THERE WAS A HUGE EXPLOSION AND A FLASH OF LIGHT OUTSIDE. LATER WE FOUND OUT THAT WAS YOUR DAD TAKING OUT ANTI-GOD.

AND BEFORE SHERLOCK OR THE REST OF US COULD DO ANYTHING, THEY WERE ALL GONE.

OH, I'M SORRY, SWEETIE. I KNOW THAT MUST BE HARD FOR YOU.

I'M-- -SNIFF- I'M OKAY.

GOT SOME KLEENEX HERE SOMEWHERE...

GRAB

TISSUES

FLIPPO

TINK

AH. SORRY.

ONE SEC--

WAIT.

CAN I SEE THAT?

WHERE DID YOU GET THIS?

OH, IT'S A LONG STORY.

SOMEONE TRASHED MY DAD'S HEADQUARTERS, I GUESS AS A WARNING TO ME, AND THEY LEFT THAT BEHIND.

WHY? DO YOU-- DO YOU KNOW IT?

KNOW IT? HONEY, I'D RECOGNIZE ONE OF THOSE ANYWHERE.

THE GUARDS AT SPIRAL ASYLUM CARRIED FLASHLIGHTS JUST LIKE THAT.

THE GUARDS AT SPIRAL?! ARE YOU SURE?

I SURE SPENT ENOUGH TIME LOCKED UP IN THERE. I SHOULD KNOW.

THEN IT HITS ME. ALL THE PIECES START TO FIT TOGETHER AND I KNOW...

...I KNOW WHERE SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN IS!

I GET MISS PARKER BACK TO HER ROOM, THEN HAIL THE FIRST CAB I SEE.

TWENTY MINUTES LATER I'M BACK WHERE THIS ALL STARTED... BACK AT SPIRAL ASYLUM.

SPIRAL ASYLUM

SPIRAL CITY CABS & CO.

MS. WEBER?

I WASN'T EXPECTING TO SEE YOU BACK HERE SO SOON.

NEITHER WAS I.

VVVRRR RRR MMM

I BET YOU DIDN'T THINK YOU'D SEE ME HERE EITHER, DID YOU, CONCRETESTADOR?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

I THINK YOU FORGOT THIS AT MY DAD'S HALL OF HAMMER.

YOU DUMMY.

WHAT?! THIS IS MY FAULT?!

I WOULD HAVE GOTTEN HERE EVENTUALLY, BUT YOUR MISTAKE JUST SPED THINGS UP A BIT.

ONCE I REALIZED IT WAS YOU WHO BROKE INTO MY DAD'S HALL OF HAMMER AND ATTACKED ME, IT ALL STARTED TO MAKE SENSE.

OF COURSE IT HAD TO HAVE BEEN SOMEONE MY DAD KNEW AND TRUSTED WHO BROKE IN, AN OLD ALLY LIKE YOU, CONCRETESTADOR.

NO ONE ELSE WOULD BE ABLE TO BYPASS HIS SECURITY.

THEN I WRACKED MY BRAIN TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHY YOU WOULD WANT TO SCARE ME OFF OF MY HUNT FOR SHERLOCK?

AND THEN I REMEMBERED WHAT YOU SAID, WARDEN, THAT SPIRAL ASYLUM WAS PRIVATELY OWNED.

HE PUT YOU UP TO ALL OF THIS, DIDN'T HE? YOUR EMPLOYER? HE PROBABLY HAD GRIMJIM LIE TO ME TOO ABOUT SHERLOCK'S ROLE IN THE HEROES' DISAPPEARANCE.

SHERLOCK WASN'T HEADED TOWARDS THE HEROES WHEN THEY DISAPPEARED, LIKE GRIMJIM SAID. HE WAS IN A SECRET MEETING TRYING TO RALLY THE OTHER VILLAINS TO HELP THEM.

MS. WEBER!

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT! IT WOULD BE BEST IF YOU STOPPED THIS RIGHT NOW!

WHY?

ARE YOU GOING TO ATTACK ME AGAIN?!

WE NEVER WANTED TO HURT ANYONE...

...JUST SCARE YOU A BIT.

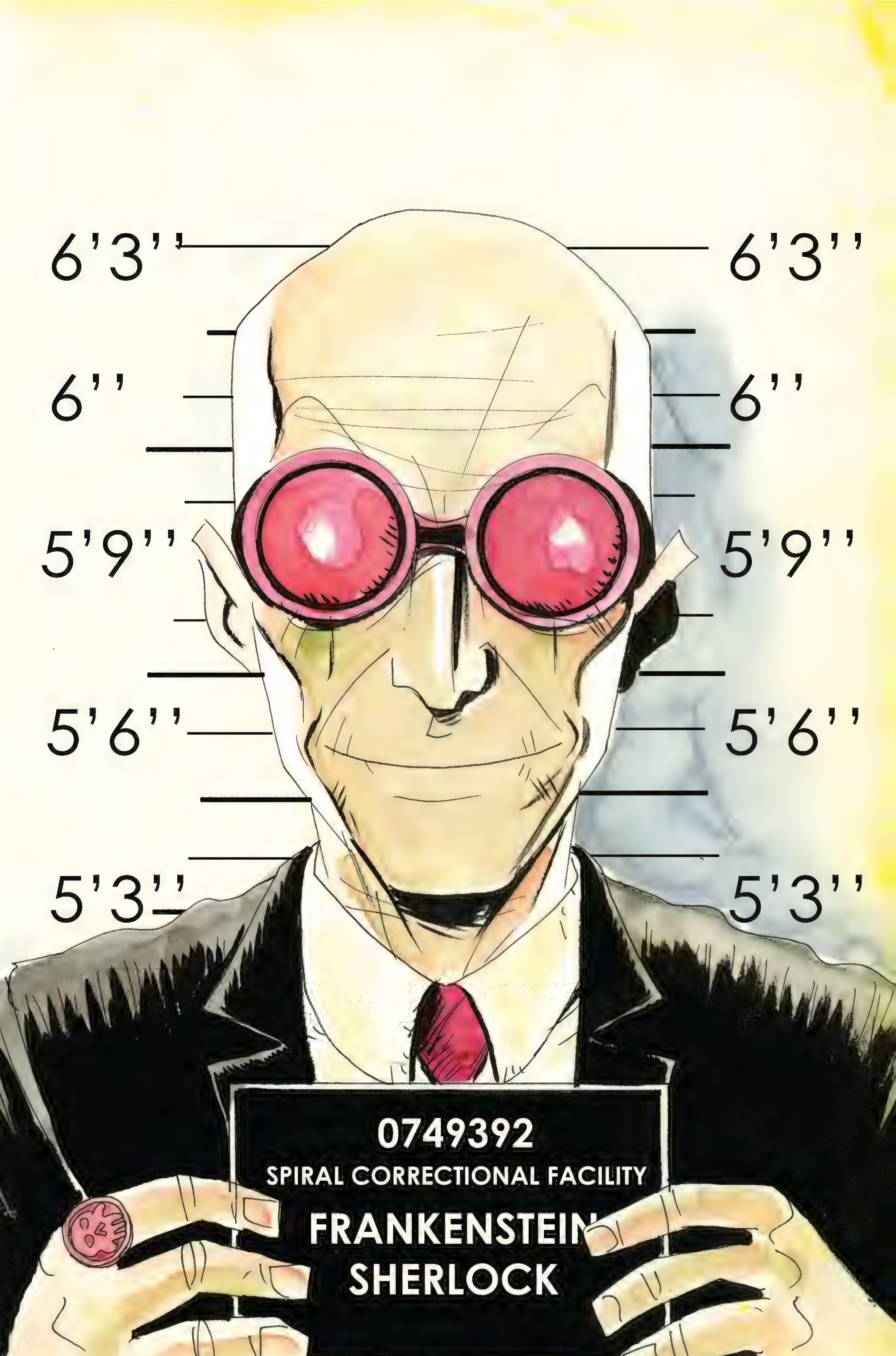
WELL, YOUR SCARE TACTICS DIDN'T WORK.

YOUR EMPLOYER PUT YOU ALL UP TO IT BECAUSE HE DOESN'T WANT TO BE FOUND.

HE SENT ME ON A WILD GOOSE CHASE AND HE WAS HERE THE WHOLE DAMNED TIME!

...SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN HAS BEEN RIGHT HERE ALL ALONG!

DAVIDRUBIN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SPIRAL CORRECTIONAL FACILITY
FRANKENSTEIN
SHERLOCK

LET ME TELL YOU A STORY...

AFTER ALL, THAT IS WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, ISN'T IT?

STORIES.

WELL, THIS STORY STARTS A LONG TIME AGO, IN LONDON.

IT STARTS IN 1893 AND IT STARTS WITH A MAN... A MAN WHO USED HIS MIND TO MAKE HIMSELF MORE THAN A MAN.

HIS BODY WAS WEAK, FAILING HIM.

SOON HE WOULD BE DEAD.

AND WHILE HIS BODY WASTED AWAY THERE WERE THOSE WHO SHOWED HIM KINDNESS.

S FRANKENSTEIN

BUT HE KNEW THAT HER MERCY COULD NOT SAVE HIM.

THERE, THERE.

IT WILL BE OVER SOON. GOD WILL HAVE MERCY ON YOU.

ONLY HIS MIND COULD DO THAT.

SO HE USED HIS REMARKABLE MIND TO SAVE HIMSELF... TO MAKE IT SO HE WOULD NEVER FEAR DEATH AGAIN.

OR SO HE THOUGHT.

BUT THIS STORY DID NOT END THERE.

IN FACT, IT WAS JUST BEGINNING.

ONCE HE CURED HIMSELF FROM EVER DYING AND EVER GETTING OLDER, THE MAN TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO BETTERING THE WORLD AROUND HIM USING HIS INCREDIBLE INVENTIONS.

BUT HE DID NOT JUST WORK ALONE IN SOME LABORATORY.

THE MAN TOOK TO THE STREETS OF LONDON, WHERE HE BECAME A LEGEND...A HERO.

THERE WAS NO CRIME HIS BRILLIANT MIND AND INGENUITY COULD NOT SOLVE.

AND, WITH HIS UNDYING BODY FREE FROM HARM, THERE WAS NO FIEND HE COULD NOT APPREHEND.

VICTORIAN SOCIETY EMBRACED HIM AND HE WAS CELEBRATED AND REVERED.

IT WOULD BE EASY TO THINK THE MAN HAD EVERYTHING HE EVER DESIRED.

BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY, WHEN HE RETURNED HOME, SURROUNDED BY THE LIFE HIS WEALTH AND HIS INVENTIONS HAD GIVEN HIM, HE WAS STILL VERY MUCH ALONE.

THE MAN NEVER FORGOT THE ONE PERSON WHO WAS KIND TO HIM WHEN HE WAS AT HIS LOWEST.

AND IN HER ARMS HE FOUND ALL THAT HAD BEEN MISSING.

THE MAN WAS COMPLETE. HIS STORY WAS PERFECT. BUT AGAIN, FATE WAS ABOUT TO DEAL HIM A DARK AND IRONIC HAND...

SOON AFTER THEIR MARRIAGE, SHE WAS FELLED BY THE VERY ILLNESS SHE HAD GIVEN SO MANY OTHERS COMFORT THROUGH.

BUT HE TOLD HER NOT TO FEAR DEATH.

HE WOULD USE HIS MIND AND HIS INVENTIONS TO SAVE HER AND MAKE HER UNDYING, JUST LIKE HIM.

BUT FOR SOME REASON, IT DID NOT WORK ON HER AS IT DID WITH HIM, AND HE COULD NOT SOLVE THE RIDDLE IN TIME.

HIS HAPPINESS WAS GONE.

DEAD.

AND HE WAS CURSED TO LIVE FOREVER WITH THAT PAIN.

AND THAT PAIN SOON TURNED TO BITTERNESS.

AND THAT BITTERNESS TURNED TO RAGE.

AND THIS IS WHERE OUR STORY CHANGES.

THE STORY OF A HERO BECOMES THE STORY OF A VILLAIN.

THE MAN LASHED OUT AT THE WORLD THAT HE HAD TRIED TO MAKE BETTER.

A WORLD THAT GAVE HIM ONLY LOSS AND PAIN IN RETURN.

HE COULD HAVE CONQUERED LONDON.

HE COULD HAVE MADE HIMSELF A KING.

BUT HE COULD NOT STAY IN THIS PLACE.

EVERY STREET WAS A REMINDER OF WHAT HE ONCE HAD.

EVERY WINDOW AND DOORWAY A HOLE IN HIS HEART THAT REMINDED HIM OF HER.

SO HE LEFT HIS HOME AND HE HEADED TO A NEW WORLD.

A NEW COUNTRY TO PUNISH.

A NEW LAND THAT WOULD COME TO FEAR HIS NAME...

...SPIRAL CITY WOULD BE HIS BATTLEGROUND AND AMERICA WOULD COME TO FEAR THE NAME SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN.

BUT IT WAS 1926 AND SPIRAL CITY WAS READY TO SERVE A FEW MIRACLES OF ITS OWN.

AND THERE WAS ALSO DARKNESS TO DOC STEELE'S LIGHT AS THE CRIMSON FIST EMERGED FROM THE SHADOWS AND BACK ALLEYS OF SPIRAL LIKE AN AVENGING ANGEL.

AND THEN, IN 1932, FROM A FAR AWAY LAND, TAZARA THE GODDESS WARRIOR ARRIVED, THE THIRD MEMBER OF THIS TRINITY OF HEROES.

AND, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HIS BELOVED WIFE DIED, SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN FOUND HE WAS NOT ALONE.

THEY WERE THE FIRST OF A NEW BREED OF ADVENTURER, AS IF FORGED FROM THE HEARTLANDS OF AMERICA TO COUNTER SHERLOCK'S EVERY MOVE.

THERE WAS DOC STEELE, AN ADVENTURER AND INVENTOR WHOSE GENIUS MAY ALMOST HAVE RIVALED SHERLOCK HIMSELF!

HE NOW KNEW THAT AS LONG AS HE WAS THERE TO STRIKE TERROR IN THE HEARTS OF SPIRAL CITY'S CITIZENS, THIS NEW BREED OF ADVENTURER WOULD BE THERE TO STOP HIM.

THEY COULD BE LOCKED IN THIS DANCE OF GOOD AND EVIL FOREVER.

AND EVEN BETTER; STEELE, TAZARA, AND CRIMSON FIST WERE ONLY THE PRECURSORS.

FOR SOON IT WOULD BE THE DAWN OF A WHOLE NEW AGE OF COMBATANTS FOR SHERLOCK...

...A GOLDEN AGE.

THIS NEW EPOCH OF HEROES CAME IN EVERY VARIETY IMAGINABLE.

EACH NEW CHAMPION SEEMINGLY MORE COLOURFUL THAN THE LAST.

AND SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN WAS THERE TO MATCH THEM AT EVERY TURN.

...AND THAT IS MY STORY.

AND QUITE A STORY, IT IS, SHERLOCK. I MAYBE COULD HAVE DONE WITHOUT ALL THE TALKING IN THE THIRD PERSON THOUGH.

OH, AND I ALSO PROBABLY COULD HAVE DONE WITHOUT YOU SABOTAGING MY INVESTIGATION AND SENDING ME ON A WILD GOOSE CHASE!

I AM SORRY TO MISLEAD YOU, MS. WEBER, BUT I HAVE RETIRED FROM THE PUBLIC EYE, LEFT MY LIFE AS A VILLAIN BEHIND, AND I DON'T TAKE KINDLY TO NOSEY YOUNG SNOOPS SEEKING ME OUT.

NOSEY!? SO THAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO HAVE WARDEN WINGMAN LIE TO ME AND TO SEND YOUR LACKEY, CONCRETESTADOR TO TRASH MY FATHER'S HALL OF HAMMER?!

CONCRETESTADOR WAS UNDER STRICT INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO HARM YOU OR CAUSE ANY PERMANENT DAMAGE TO YOUR FATHER'S LAIR. HE WAS ONLY EVER MEANT TO SCARE YOU OFF YOUR FOOLHARDY QUEST.

YEAH, WELL, NEWS FLASH, SHERLOCK-- IT ONLY MADE ME MORE DETERMINED TO FIND YOU.

YES, I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU WOULD HAVE INHERITED THE SAME DOGGEDNESS AND FORTITUDE AS YOUR FATHER.

EXCUSE ME, SIR... REFRESHMENTS ARE SERVED.

HOW DO YOU DO, MA'AM.

I MUST TELL YOU, I ALWAYS HAD THE UTMOST RESPECT FOR YOUR FATHER.

BLACK HAMMER WAS A FINE ADVERSARY.

AH, THANK YOU.

MS. WEBER, MEET MY LONG-TIME ASSISTANT, IGOR WATSON.

RIGHT.

AND THAT BRINGS ME TO MY FIRST QUESTION... HOW DID BOTH OF YOU KNOW WHO MY FATHER WAS?

DID WINGMAN TELL YOU THAT TOO?

OH NO, MS. WEBER. I HAVE KEPT A KEEN EYE ON YOU SINCE THE CATACLYSM.

ANY RELATIVE OF ONE OF THE MISSING HEROES GARNERED A CLOSE EYE.

NOW PLEASE, I DO APOLOGIZE FOR MY DEPLORABLE BEHAVIOUR IN MISLEADING YOU. HAVE A SEAT.

NOW THAT YOU ARE HERE I--I MAY AS WELL ANSWER ALL OF YOUR QUESTIONS.

WHY DO I GET THE FEELING YOU ARE ABOUT TO SPRING SOME DEVIOUS TRAP ON ME?

WHY SHOULD I TRUST ANYTHING YOU SAY OR DO, SHERLOCK?

AS I SAID, THE LIFE OF CRIME IS FAR BEHIND ME.

THAT MAN THAT I SPOKE OF, THE SHERLOCK I TOLD YOU ABOUT IN MY STORY, HE IS LONG GONE.

MY THIRST FOR REVENGE AND MAYHEM...WELL, IT DISAPPEARED WITH YOUR FATHER AND-- AND THE OTHERS.

AND I AM JUST SUPPOSED TO TAKE YOUR WORD FOR THAT? AFTER ALL YOU'VE DONE?

YOU'RE A REPORTER, MY DEAR, SO I PRESUME YOU HAVE DONE YOUR RESEARCH.

TELL ME, WHEN IS THE LAST TIME YOU REMEMBER SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN DOING ANYTHING ILLEGAL?

IT WAS-- IT WAS QUITE SOME TIME AGO, I ADMIT. A COUPLE OF YEARS BEFORE THE CATACLYSM, MAYBE?

INDEED IT WAS.

IN FACT, SINCE THEN I HAVE USED MY CONSIDERABLE WEALTH TO BECOME ONE OF SPIRAL CITY'S GREATEST PHILANTHROPISTS...ALL IN PRIVATE, OF COURSE.

OKAY, FINE. LET'S SAY I GIVE YOU THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT AND CHOOSE TO BELIEVE YOU'VE REALLY REFORMED. THAT STILL DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHAT YOU WERE UP TO WHEN THE CATACLYSM HIT.

METAL MINOTAUR AND CTHU-LOU BOTH TOLD ME ABOUT THE SECRET MEETING FOR SUPERVILLAINS YOU HELD AS ANTI-GOD BATTLED MY DAD AND THE OTHER HEROES.

SO WHAT WERE YOU PLANNING TO DO?!

PLANNING? I WASN'T PLANNING ANYTHING, MS. WEBER. IT WAS EXACTLY AS MINOTAUR SAID...I WANTED TO HELP THE HEROES. I--I WANTED TO SAVE THEM.

OKAY, AND THIS IS WHERE I GET TOTALLY LOST, SHERLOCK! I STARTED LOOKING FOR YOU BECAUSE I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU HAD SOME IDEA WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO THE HEROES.

AND I CAN BUY YOU RETIRING FROM CRIME, SORT OF. BUT EVEN IF YOU HAD RETIRED, WHY ON EARTH WOULD YOU EVER ACTUALLY WANT TO HELP SAVE MY DAD AND ABE AND GAIL AND THE OTHERS?!

...

LISTEN, I'VE COME THIS FAR, SO JUST COME CLEAN ALREADY.

MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING YOU KNOW, SOMETHING THAT YOU'VE OVERLOOKED, THAT CAN HELP LEAD ME TO THE TRUTH ABOUT MY FATHER!

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN DOES NOT OVERLOOK ANYTHING, MS. WEBER.

-SIGH- PERHAPS YOU ARE RIGHT. I HAVE ALREADY SHARED SO MUCH OF MY LIFE WITH YOU... AT THIS POINT I SUPPOSE THERE IS LITTLE HARM IN TELLING THE REST...

THE 1950S AND 60S WERE A VERY EVENTFUL TIME.

I WON THE RACE TO THE MOON, PLANNING ON USING IT AS A STAGING GROUND FOR MY GREATEST ATTACK YET.

AND THAT'S WHEN I REALIZED THAT TIMES WERE CHANGING, FASTER AND FASTER. THE GOLDEN AGE HAD PASSED ME BY AND A NEW ERA WAS HERE...

...A **SILVER AGE** OF SCIENCE AND WONDER.

AND SEEMINGLY IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, THE SILVER BECAME TARNISHED AND **BRONZED OVER.**

THINGS BECAME DARKER, GRITTIER, BUT STILL HEROES LIKE YOUR FATHER ROSE UP AND GAVE ME SOMETHING TO KEEP ME GOING.

THE RUSH I FELT AFTER MY BATTLES WITH THE HEROES WAS MORE AND MORE FLEETING.

ONCE AGAIN I STARTED TO QUESTION MY PLACE IN THIS WRETCHED WORLD. I STARTED TO FEEL EMPTY... ...ALONE AGAIN.

AND THAT, MS. WEBER, IS WHEN THE MOST UNEXPECTED THING HAPPENED... SOMETHING I THOUGHT WOULD NEVER AGAIN BE POSSIBLE.

THE CATACLYSM?

ANTI-GOD?

NO, MY DEAR. AS YOU SAID EARLIER, IT HAPPENED A YEAR OR TWO BEFORE THAT. AND IT WOULD CHANGE EVERYTHING.

WHAT WAS IT? WHAT HAPPENED, SHERLOCK? PLEASE.

I FELL IN LOVE AGAIN.

SHE HAD BEEN THERE THE WHOLE TIME...RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY EYES. YET I WAS TOO BLINDED WITH MY OWN RAGE AND GUILT AND RESENTMENT TO SEE HER FOR WHO SHE WAS...

THAT IS...UNTIL SHE SAID HER MAGIC WORD.

ZAFRAM!

SHERLOCK... I'M TIRED OF FIGHTING.

GAIL?!

Y--YOU AND GOLDEN GAIL?!

YES.

FOR YEARS-- DECADES-- I ONLY KNEW HER AS AMERICA'S SUPER SWEETHEART.

BUT THEN SHE REVEALED HER TRUE FACE TO ME.

SHE SHOWED ME THE WOMAN SHE REALLY WAS.

A BEAUTIFUL, FUNNY, AND UNPREDICTABLE WOMAN.

SO FULL OF LIFE.

SO FULL OF LOVE.

SHE REMINDED ME WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO BE HUMAN.

SHE REMINDED ME OF THE MAN I ONCE WAS.

AND THEN THAT-- THAT FUCKING ANTI-GOD CAME AND SNATCHED IT ALL AWAY FROM ME! HE TOOK MY GAIL AND LEFT ME HERE ALL ALONE AGAIN!

I--I DON'T BELIEVE THAT.

WHAT? EVEN NOW YOU THINK I'M LYING?!

WELL, EXCUSE ME, MS. WEBER, BUT I HAVE BARED MY SOUL TO YOU!

IF THAT IS NOT ENOUGH FOR YOU, THEN YOU CAN LEAVE! I HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO SAY!

NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT. I--I DO BELIEVE YOU.

WHAT I MEANT WAS THAT I DON'T BELIEVE THAT ANTI-GOD KILLED GAIL, OR MY DAD OR THE REST OF THE MISSING HEROES.

I WAS THERE, MS. WEBER. JUST AS METAL MINOTAUR AND THE OTHERS SAID, I WAS HEADED RIGHT TOWARDS THE BATTLE WITH ANTI-GOD...

I SAW YOUR FATHER DELIVER THE FINAL BLOW AND I SAW THE COSMIC WAVE THAT WAS CAUSED AS ANTI-GOD EXPLODED.

NOTHING COULD HAVE SURVIVED THAT. NOT MY GAIL...NOT YOUR FATHER.

THEY ARE GONE, MS. WEBER. AND THE SOONER YOU ACCEPT THAT, THE SOONER YOU CAN MOVE ON WITH YOUR LIFE.

TRUST ME, YOU HAVE TO LET IT GO. IF NOT IT WILL STEW INSIDE YOU. IT WILL ROT YOUR INSIDES UNTIL YOU TOO BECOME BLACK AND EMPTY...

...JUST LIKE ME.

NO! I REFUSE TO ACCEPT THAT! I KNOW ALL THE EVIDENCE SAYS THAT MY DAD AND THE OTHERS ARE DEAD, BUT I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THE EVIDENCE!

tap!

ALL I CARE ABOUT IS WHAT I KNOW IN MY HEART.

THAT IS FALSE HOPE! I CANNOT--I WILL NOT BELIEVE THAT! IF I DO, I WILL ONLY BE HEARTBROKEN ALL OVER AGAIN.

YOU ARE SUCH A COWARD!

HOW DARE YOU, LITTLE GIRL!

I AM SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN!

I AM THE TERROR OF SPIRAL CITY!

I HAVE SEEN AND DONE MORE IN MY LIFE THAN YOU WILL EVER EVEN DREAM OF!

YEAH? WELL, ALL I SEE IS A BITTER OLD MAN WHO'S TOO SCARED TO FEEL ANYTHING EVER AGAIN.

FUPP!

DON'T WORRY, SHERLOCK, YOUR SECRETS ARE SAFE WITH ME. I DON'T CARE ENOUGH TO TELL ANYONE ABOUT YOU. I HAVE BETTER THINGS TO DO...LIKE LOOK FOR MY DAD.

OH, AND WHEN I FIND THEM... I'LL BE SURE TO TELL GAIL THAT YOU WERE TOO SCARED TO COME LOOKING FOR HER.

SLAM!

WHAT A WASTE OF TIME.

I WAS SO SURE THAT FINDING SHERLOCK WOULD HELP TO UNCOVER SOME NEW CLUES INTO THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE HEROES.

BUT NOW I'M JUST AS CONFUSED AND LOST AS EVER.

COLD BEER HOT DOGS HAMBURGERS COFFEE

I GUESS I'M BACK AT SQUARE ONE.

SO WHERE DO I GO NEXT?

WHAT DO I--

WHAT THE HELL?

MS. WEBER, WAIT!

KRRMMM

SHERLOCK?!

I--I HAVE BEEN INCREDIBLY RUDE.

KRRMMM

I WONDER, CAN YOU FIND IT IN YOUR HEART TO FORGIVE ME?

I--

OF COURSE.

I KNOW YOU LOST A LOT, TOO.

YES. AND ALL I DID WAS HIDE WHILE THE WORLD FINALLY STARTED TO PASS ME BY.

DOES THIS MEAN YOU BELIEVE ME? DO YOU THINK GAIL AND MY DAD AND THE REST ARE STILL ALIVE SOMEWHERE?

I BELIEVE THAT YOU BELIEVE THAT. AND--DESPITE MY BEST EFFORTS--SEEING YOUR FAITH SEEMS TO HAVE REKINDLED SOMETHING IN ME AS WELL.

SO I WILL PROMISE YOU THIS. AS LONG AS YOU BELIEVE... AS LONG AS YOU WANT TO KEEP LOOKING, I WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH ANY AND EVERY RESOURCE YOU MAY NEED.

MY WEALTH IS RIVALED ONLY BY MY GENIUS, MS. WEBER. AND IT IS NOW AT YOUR DISPOSAL.

I--WOW. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

HOW ABOUT YOU SAVE YOUR WORDS FOR GAIL, SHOULD YOU FIND HER...

CLIC!!

KRRMMM

...TELL HER I NEVER STOPPED LOVING HER.

I CAN DO THAT.

THANK YOU.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

WHILE I LOOK FOR THEM?

LOOK AROUND, MS. WEBER...

...THE CITY HAS CHANGED AGAIN.

IT'S A NEW ERA.

A NEW AGE.

AND, THE WAY I SEE IT, IT'S ONE THAT HAS A SERIOUS LACK OF HEROES.

...I THINK I MAY HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT.

PART FOUR:

THE UNDYING LOVE OF SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN

a

JEFF LEMIRE & DAVID RUBÍN

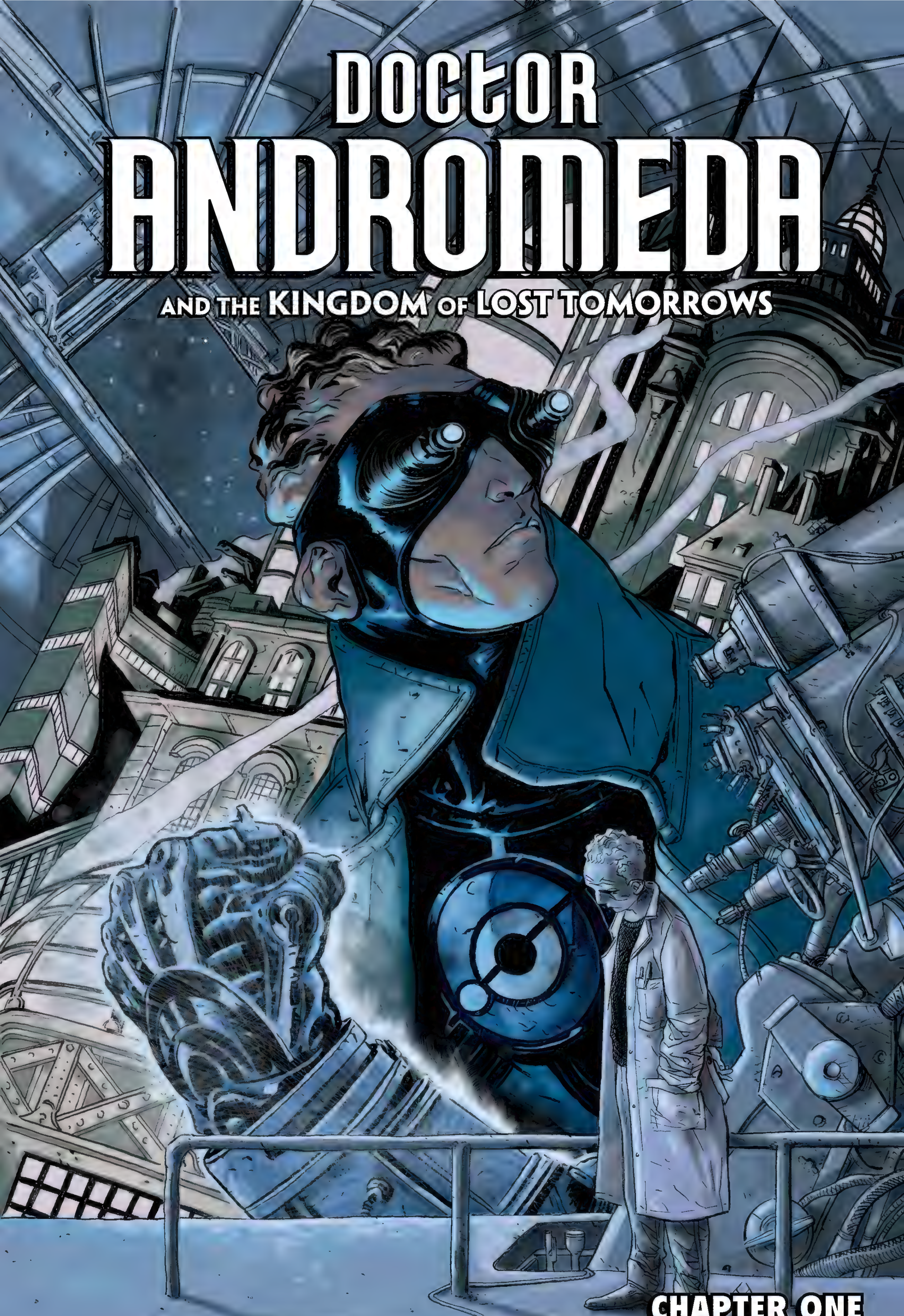
production, filmed in glorious

COMICVISION

THE END?

DOCTOR ANDROMEDA

AND THE KINGDOM OF LOST TOMORROWS



CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER ONE: STAR CHILD

Dear Charlie, I'll be honest--I barely know where to start...

It's been so long since I've even been back in town. I was going to come see you right away but--

Well, we'll get to that. At any rate, I went to the observatory first (big surprise, right?).

I guess I thought it would help me gather my thoughts to see the old place. But it was just...sad.

Everything was right where I left it, but it was different. Gray and old and covered in a thick layer of dust.

Hell, Charlie, most days I feel like I'm covered in a layer of dust.

I could lie and say I don't really know why I came here, but we both know that I always know what I'm doing. Or at least, I like to tell myself I do.

Call me what you want, but I've always been a man of purpose. I've always been driven.

Always told you that you can get whatever you want in this life if you're willing to work for it.

But you don't want to hear that now, do you, Charlie? After all, it was my passion for work that got us in this mess in the first place, right?

Work. Let's just call it what it really is...

...My obsession.

And what did it really amount to? All those years looking up at the stars? Was it worth it?

I have to think it was. I have to think it meant <u>something</u>...

Once upon a time I was relevant, wasn't I? Once upon a time I was young...

...and my sins were yet to come.

1941

MR. ROBINSON? JIM ROBINSON?

UH, *DOCTOR* ROBINSON.

DOCTOR. APOLOGIES. AT ANY RATE, DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT?

DON'T GET MANY VISITORS UP HERE. WHAT CAN I HELP YOU FELLAS WITH?

DOCTOR, MY NAME IS AGENT STERN, AND THIS IS AGENT MACAVOY. WE'RE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

UNCLE SAM IN SPIRAL OBSERVATORY?! WELL, THIS DOESN'T HAPPEN EVERY DAY.

OKAY, AGENTS, YOU HAVE MY ATTENTION. WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

YOUR WORK IN, UH, WHAT DO YOU CALL IT...*PARA-RADIATION?* WELL, IT'S GOTTEN *OUR* ATTENTION.

THAT--THAT WORK HAS NOT BEEN PUBLISHED YET. HOW DID YOU--

WE HAVE OUR WAYS, DOCTOR.

=AHEM= YES, WELL, IF YOU DO KNOW MY WORK, YOU KNOW THAT THE EXISTENCE OF THE PARA-ZONE AND THE ENERGIES CONTAINED THERE ARE STILL VERY MUCH ***THEORETICAL.***

YOU MUST FOLLOW THE NEWS, DOCTOR. AMERICA WON'T BE ABLE TO STAY OUT OF THE WAR FOREVER.

AND THAT IS ***NOT*** THEORETICAL.

OKAY, SO WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH ME?

SIMPLE. WE WANT TO FUND YOUR WORK. AND THEN WE WANT YOU TO ***FIND*** THIS "PARA-ZONE." AND THEN WE WANT YOU TO USE IT TO MAKE US ***A WEAPON.***

HOW MUCH?!

YOU HEARD ME, JOANIE! UNCLE SAM IS GOING TO MAKE US *RICH!* WE'LL BE ABLE TO GET OUT OF THIS DUMP, FIND A SPOT IN A NICE HOUSE IN THE SUBURBS.

I DON'T KNOW, JIMMY. IT SOUNDS DANGEROUS.

THERE'S NOTHING DANGEROUS ABOUT IT! I WON'T BE DOING ANYTHING I WOULDN'T HAVE DONE ANYWAY--I'LL JUST HAVE THE MONEY TO COMPLETE MY WORK YEARS--HELL, *DECADES*--EARLIER THAN I EVER DREAMED!

BUT THEY WANT A *WEAPON!*

WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A WHOLE NEW ENERGY SOURCE! WEAPONS ARE ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG, JOAN! AND SO WHAT--IF I CAN HELP STOP THE KRAUTS, IS THAT SO BAD?

WHERE ARE YOU GOING NOW?

WHERE AM I GOING?! I'VE GOTTA GET BACK TO WORK, JOANIE!

BUT YOU ***JUST GOT HOME,*** JIMMY! I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU ALL DAY. I'VE BEEN COOPED UP HERE WITH THE BABY.

I KNOW, JOAN. BUT THIS IS IMPORTANT! IF I DO THE WORK NOW, WE'LL HAVE IT MADE. YOU, ME, AND THE BABY WILL NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING EVER AGAIN!

I KNOW, I KNOW.

THIS IS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME CHANCE, JOAN!

YOU'LL KEEP YOUR MOMMY COMPANY WON'T YOU, SLUGGER? DADDY IS ABOUT TO CHANGE THE WORLD.

OKAY, BUT DON'T STAY AT THE OBSERVATORY ***ALL*** NIGHT, JIM.

NO PROMISES! I'M CLOSE, JOAN... I'M ***REALLY*** CLOSE NOW. I KNOW IT!

CLOSE TO WHAT, JIMMY? I SWEAR I BARELY UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS YOU DO UP THERE IN THAT LAB.

CLOSE TO ***THE STARS,*** JOANIE! ***TO THE STARS!***

Fig. 1

Yep, those were the days, Charlie, let me tell you. I had endless energy. I'd work in the lab for days at a time without going home.

Fig. 2

The government's money just kept coming and I just keep working.

Fig. 3

INVENTOR
JAMES
ROBINSON

The days became weeks without me noticing. Weeks turned into months. And I kept getting closer and closer--

Then I was finally ready. It was time to make the theoretical real.

It was time to bring the stars to me.

THIS IS DOCTOR JAMES ROBINSON. IT IS JUNE 12, 1941...

IT'S MY SON'S FIRST BIRTHDAY TODAY. SEEMS LIKE A LUCKY DAY TO ME...

SO HERE I GO, PARA-GAUNTLET TRIAL NUMBER ONE. ATTEMPTING TO BREACH THE DIMENSIONAL MEMBRANE IN FIVE... FOUR...THREE... TWO...ONE...

NOW!

KZZT

SHRAKK

AAAHHHHH!

Was that the best day of my life, Charlie? Or was it the worst?

SHRKK

I wanted to go to the stars. But that night I did more than that...

SHKK

...I went beyond.

And then--

Then I came home.

J-JIMMY?!

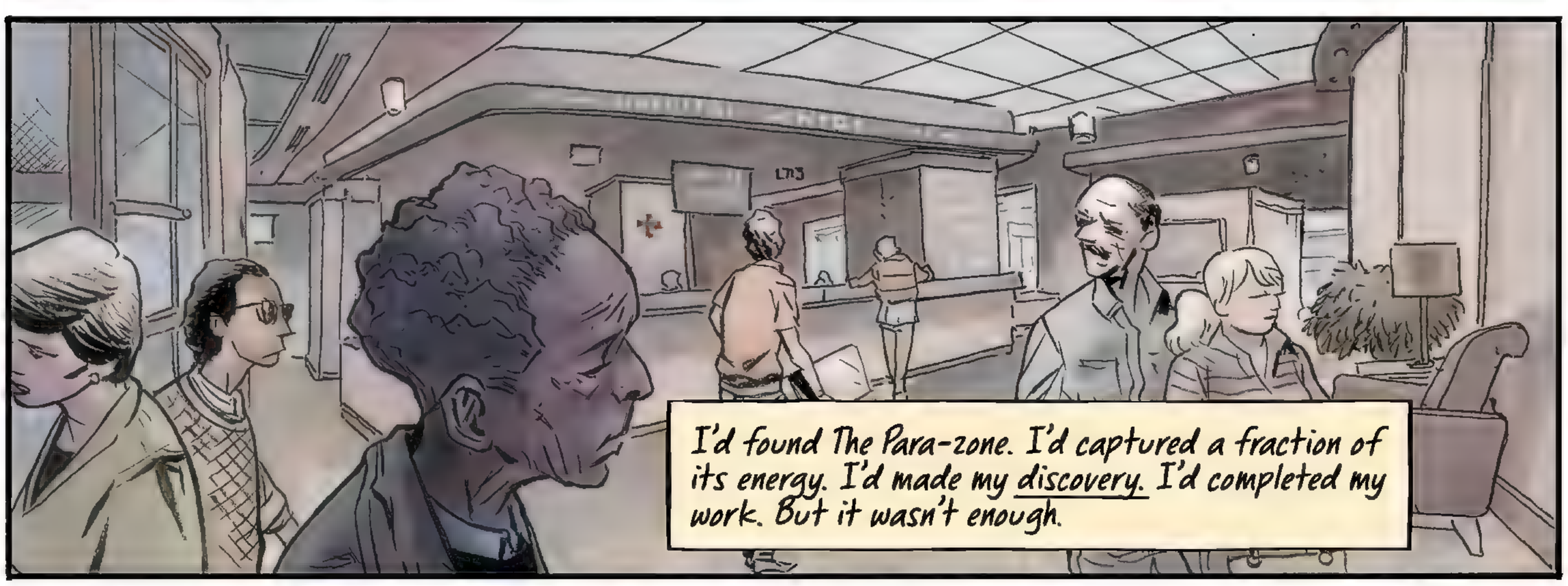
I DID IT, JOANIE.

WHAT--WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, JIMMY?! I DON'T--

I CAPTURED THE STARS.

Christ, I was so arrogant, Charlie. I see that now.

I told Joan that all my work would pay off. That once I succeeded we'd have it made. But that was a lie.
289


I'd found The Para-zone. I'd captured a fraction of its energy. I'd made my discovery. I'd completed my work. But it wasn't enough.

Because that's the thing, isn't it? Once you touch heaven, you can't be happy until you do it again.

GIDEONS
And I'd soon learn there were other ways to get that rush. Until that night I was a scientist. But after...after, I became something more.

1942

OKAY, OKAY, EVERYONE JUST CALM DOWN!
YOU CALM DOWN, ABE. I HAVE THINGS TO DO.
YEAH, ABE. LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD. WE ALL KNOW WHY WE'RE HERE.

ALL RIGHT, WINGMAN, FINE. LET'S JUST CUT THE CRAP THEN. AMERICA HAS GONE TO WAR AND REPORTS SAY THAT HITLER HAS HIS OWN BATCH OF COSTUMED FIGHTERS.

SO, THE QUESTION IS, HOW LONG ARE WE GONNA STAY HERE IN SPIRAL CITY AND WATCH OUR BOYS DIE FROM AFAR?

YOU ARE OMITTING A VERY IMPORTANT DETAIL, ABRAHAM.

CAPTAIN NIGHT IS RIGHT. THE POWER OF HITLER'S SUPER SOLDIER IS SAID TO RIVAL ANY OF OURS.

DOCTOR DAY AND I FEEL WE MAY BE BETTER SERVED HERE, FIGHTING ON THE HOME FRONT.

I HAVE ALREADY DIED ONCE. I DO NOT FEAR DYING AGAIN.

UH-HUH. CREEPY AS HE IS, I AGREE WITH THE HORSELESS RIDER. LET'S GO KICK HITLER'S BUTT.

OKAY. WELL, THIS IS AMERICA, SO LET'S DO THIS THE DEMOCRATIC WAY. WE'LL VOTE. ALL THOSE WHO ARE ***FOR*** JOINING THE WAR IN EUROPE SAY "AYE."

When the government came to me they had asked for a weapon.

AYE.

YEP.

INDEED

I found something much more than that. I found a miracle.

WINGMAN? I UNDERSTAND CAPTAIN NIGHT AND DOCTOR DAY WANTING TO SIT THIS ONE OUT--AFTER ALL, THEY HAVE TWINS AT HOME. BUT *YOU?*

IF WE ALL GO TO EUROPE, THE SUPER CROOKS HERE WILL RUN WILD. I MEAN, IF WE ALL AGREE, I'LL GO, BUT--

AGREED--

WE WILL GO IF THE MAJORITY WILLS IT.

WELL, WE'RE REALLY IN A DILLY OF A PICKLE NOW. WE GOT A TIE, SO--

But a miracle wasn't enough for me...

I SAY WE GO...

...So I *became* the weapon.

...LET'S SEND THOSE NAZIS BACK TO HELL.

WHO THE HECK ARE *YOU?*

ANDROMEDA. CALL ME ***DOCTOR ANDROMEDA.***

Yep, those were the golden days, Charlie. Sure, the war was terrible, but still-- I'd never felt so alive.

All those years with my nose stuck in a book, or hunched over a microscope in my lab...I was suddenly <u>set free.</u>

I'M LOOKING FOR THE CANCER WARD. IS THIS--AM I IN THE RIGHT SPOT?

And for the first time I wasn't alone. I was part of something. They called us <u>The Liberty Squadron.</u> We were unbeatable.

ONCOLOGY IS THAT WAY, SIR.

THANK YOU.

I did things I never imagined possible.

HOSPICE

You should have seen me, Charlie... Well, I suppose you did--later, in the newsreels--but it's not the same. Trust me.

And little did I know, that was <u>only the beginning</u> for Doctor Andromeda.

Yet here I am, all these years later. It all seems like a dream now. It hardly seems like I was ever that man, Charlie.

26

28

EXCUSE ME, CAN I HELP YOU?

OH...

I, UH...I JUST CAME TO VISIT THIS PATIENT.

WELL, YOU CAN'T JUST WALK IN HERE. THE HOSPICE WARD IS FOR *FAMILY ONLY.*

BUT HE *IS* MY FAMILY...

THIS IS *MY SON.*

MY LITTLE BOY.

...HELLO, CHARLIE.

CHAPTER TWO

Charlie. Seeing you like this...I barely know what to say anymore...what to think.

You're my only son. This--this doesn't make any sense. It's not supposed to be like this.

I'm supposed to be the one that gets old and dies. You're supposed to be the one standing over my bedside.

But nothing happened like it was supposed to, did it?

I threw normal out the door the day I put that damn costume on.

And you, Charlie...you never had a choice in the matter...

1951

You were just an innocent bystander.

HEY, DAD! LOOK AT WHAT I DREW!

ONE MOMENT, CHARLIE.

IT'S YOU, DAD! I THINK I GOT YOUR COSTUME REALLY GOOD THIS TIME!

I SAID, ***ONE MINUTE,*** CHARLIE. I--THIS IS ***VERY*** IMPORTANT.

OH. OKAY. SORRY.

MY GOD!

CHARLIE, I DID IT! I--I ACTUALLY *DID IT!*

DID WHAT, DAD?

LIFE, CHARLIE! I FOUND *OTHER LIFE* OUT THERE! AT FIRST I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST AN ASTRAL ANOMALY, BUT THERE IS NO DENYING IT ANY LONGER!

I PLACED A TRANSPONDER ON THE MOON AND I'VE BEEN SENDING SIGNALS, AND NOW THEY'VE *RESPONDED!* THEY ARE OUT THERE! THEY ARE *CALLING TO ME!*

YOU MEAN, LIKE, MARTIANS, DAD?

WHAT? NO, NO. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS MARTIANS, CHARLIE. THIS ISN'T SOME SILLY DRIVE-IN MOVIE WITH LITTLE GREEN MEN. I AM TALKING ABOUT REAL INTELLIGENT LIFE OUT THERE.

OH.

DON'T YOU SEE, SON? THEY ARE CALLING TO ME. TO *ME.* *YOUR DAD.*

WE HAVE TO GET HOME. I NEED TO TELL YOUR MOTHER! THEN I HAVE TO PREPARE TO LEAVE!

CAN I COME?

321

HA! I DON'T THINK SO, CHARLIE. THIS IS *VERY IMPORTANT.* MANKIND'S FIRST CONTACT!

BUT WHY CAN'T I COME TOO?

THIS--THIS IS THE BIGGEST MISSION IN HUMAN HISTORY, SON. IT'S NO PLACE FOR A CHILD.

"No place for a child."

Why did I have to say it like that? All you wanted was to go to the stars. What child wouldn't want that?

But then, I thought it was going to be just another adventure for the great Doctor Andromeda, didn't I?

How was I to know?

BUT, JIMMY, I REALLY DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD BE GOING OFF ALONE. WHAT IF THESE--THESE ALIENS MEAN YOU HARM? WHAT IF THEY WANT TO--I DON'T KNOW--*INVADE US?!*

JOANIE, YOU'RE AS BAD AS CHARLIE. BESIDES, WE BOTH KNOW I CAN HANDLE MYSELF.

I KNOW, IT'S JUST...

JOAN, I LOVE YOU. AND I'LL BE BACK BEFORE YOU KNOW IT. I AM JUST GOING TO MAKE INITIAL CONTACT AND THEN COME HOME AND MAKE MY REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT.

I WISH I COULD COME FLYING WITH YOU, DAD. I WISH I COULD GO TO SPACE.

I KNOW, PAL. WHEN I GET BACK, OKAY? AND DON'T WORRY. I'M GOING TO BRING YOU A SOUVENIR FROM SPACE!

OKAY.

NOW, I NEED YOU TO BUCK UP, MISTER. YOU'RE GOING TO BE THE MAN OF THE HOUSE UNTIL I GET BACK! GOT IT?

YES.

BYE, JOAN. I LOVE YOU.

I LOVE YOU TOO, JIM. BE CAREFUL.

ALWAYS.

SEE YOU, CHARLIE. TAKE CARE OF YOUR MOM. I'LL BE BACK BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.

BYE, DAD.

SHRACK

GOODBYE, SON.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN HERE?

I, UH...

GET OUT!

OKAY, OKAY. I'M SORRY. I'LL GO.

NOW.

I AM. I JUST--FORGOT SOMETHING.

I ONLY WANTED TO SEE HIM.

WELL, HE DOESN'T WANT TO SEE *YOU*. I AM GOING TO TALK TO THE NURSES. YOU WON'T BE LET BACK IN HERE.

23

LOOK, RACHEL. I KNOW YOU AND I HAVE NEVER SEEN EYE TO EYE, BUT--

BUT NOTHING. YOU NEED TO LEAVE.

HE IS *MY SON.*

AND WE MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT YOU ARE NOT A PART OF OUR FAMILY, MR. ROBINSON. YOU NEED TO RESPECT THAT.

I--I WANT TO SEE HIM. I WANT TO TALK TO HIM. IT'S ONE THING TO KEEP ME AWAY FROM MY GRANDCHILDREN. BUT HE IS DYING.

AND *WHY* DO YOU THINK THAT IS?

WHAT IS *THAT* SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS? PUTTING HIM AND JOAN AROUND *ALL THAT RADIATION* ALL THOSE YEARS. YOU REALLY THINK IT'S A COINCIDENCE THEY BOTH GOT *CANCER?*

WHAT?! I--

NOW YOU LOOK HERE! MY COSMIC POWER HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS, OR WITH JOAN. I TESTED IT MANY, *MANY* TIMES. IT IS PERFECTLY SAFE!

SURE IT IS.

THAT'S NOT FAIR! WHATEVER--WHATEVER HAPPENED BETWEEN CHARLIE AND ME--I DIDN'T CAUSE *THIS.*

LOOK, I DON'T WANT CHARLIE TO HEAR US ARGUING. THAT IS THE LAST THING HE NEEDS RIGHT NOW.

CAN YOU-- CAN YOU PLEASE JUST GO?

OKAY. FINE.

I'LL BE STAYING AT MY OLD PLACE ON THE HILL. IF HE CHANGES HIS MIND--

HE WON'T.

RIGHT.

I probably should have given up right then and there, huh, Charlie?

I should have just accepted that too much time had passed.

Too much time...

1951

Too much goddamn time. That's how this all happened, wasn't it? Space and time.

They had sent a message to me. They had called to me from across the stars.

You can't even begin to imagine what it was like, Charlie. Being the first human being in existence to see that planet, their home.

But that was nothing. The real wonders had not yet even begun to reveal themselves...

Those early days were difficult. Of course I could not speak their language, but we found other ways to communicate.

Their culture, their way of life...they were incredible.

They were such a peaceful race. They did not know war. They knew only kindness.

They seemed to exist only to do good. They could even heal with touch.

Yet, I sensed something was very wrong. I soon realized that they had called me here for a reason.

I was right about one thing, they didn't know how to fight. They didn't know war...

And that had made them the prey of others who did.

I need you to understand that, Charlie. They were helpless. They truly needed me. They needed a protector.

But that is no excuse for what I did. I--I should have known better.

The thing that hunted them lived on a small world at the edge of a black hole.

I am a physicist, Charlie. I knew what that meant, yet in the heat of the moment, racing off to save the day, I didn't stop to think.

I left all that behind. The Scientist. The Husband, The Father. No...out there, so far from home, I was only the hero.

The great Doctor Andromeda... Intergalactic Dragon Slayer.

But that alien wasn't the real horror I faced in space.

The real horror greeted me when I returned, triumphant.

The aliens I had gotten to know were different. They were noticeably older.

That's when it hit me. The home of the dragon, it was so close to the black hole.

Doctor Andromeda the hero had saved the day. But Doctor Robinson the physicist had failed to use his brain. The gravity that close to the black hole slowed time dramatically compared to here... compared to Earth.

I had only been on that planet for hours, but I knew what that meant. I was already doing the calculations in my head as I sped home...

SHRAK

JOAN!

You see, to me, it only felt like hours. But to you. To your mom...

JOANIE?! CHARLIE?!

I had been gone for eighteen years.

JOAN.

EXIT

WELL, FUCK ME SIDEWAYS! DO MY EAGLE EYES DECEIVE ME OR IS THAT THE LONG-LOST JIMMY ROBINSON?!
HEY, WINGMAN.

HEY, DOC. LONG TIME NO SEE.
HELLO, GAIL.

BEER PLEASE, DINO.
YOU GOT IT.

SO WHAT THE HELL YOU DOING BACK IN TOWN?

I CAME BACK TO SEE MY SON.

OH YEAH. HOW'S HE DOING?

HATES MY GUTS. DOESN'T WANT TO SEE ME.

AH, KIDS THESE DAYS. DON'T GET ME STARTED.

I MEAN, JUST LOOK AT THESE NEW "HEROES," FOR FUCK'S SAKE. I MEAN, THIS CLOWN, ***THE SKULLDIGGER?!*** ALL HE DOES IS ***KILL*** BAD GUYS!

I MEAN, HE JUST ***BEATS THEM TO DEATH!*** SINCE WHEN DOES ***THAT*** MAKE YOU A HERO?

RIGHT. YOU JUST ***BRAINED THEM*** WITH A MACE, RIGHT?

HEY, I NEVER KILLED THE BAD GUYS! I MEAN, OF COURSE WE KILLED IN THE WAR, BUT THAT WAS A DIFFERENT TIME.

YEAH... IT WAS.

SO MY SON...HE'S DYING. CANCER.

YEAH.

!

SHIT. I'M SORRY, DOC.

ALL THE SHIT WE DONE IN OUR LIVES AND THEN SOMETHING LIKE THIS HITS, HUH?

I MEAN, WE BEAT HITLER. WE DID ALL KINDS OF CRAZY SHIT. BUT THIS-- THIS MAKES YOU FEEL SO ***POWERLESS.***

NOT ME.

HUH?

I'M NOT GOING TO SIT AROUND FEELING POWERLESS AND FEELING ***OLD.*** NO WAY. NO MORE.

OH REALLY?! AND WHAT IS IT YOU'RE GONNA DO THEN, ANDROMEDA?

I'M COMING OUT OF RETIREMENT, WING.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU GOING SENILE ALREADY, DOC?

NO. I'M SERIOUS. SPENT MY WHOLE LIFE TRYING TO MAKE MIRACLES HAPPEN. I'M NOT GOING TO STOP NOW, WING.

I'M GOING TO ***SAVE*** MY SON...

I'M GOING TO FIND A CURE FOR HIM. NO MATTER WHAT.
SHH

CHAPTER THREE

So...

SHRAK

...I went to the moon.

I hadn't been to space in a long long time. After I left you and your mom that last time, I swore I'd never leave again.

But there I was, breaking my promises.

When I first made contact with the aliens, it was with a beacon I had stationed on the moon--

Actually, you know what, Charlie, that just reminded me of something you once said...

Remember when you asked me if the aliens were Martians and I said there was no such thing as Martians? Ha. Little did I know, huh?

Anyway, when I went back to the moon it was to try and reactivate the beacon. To see if I could make contact with them again.

No one had heard from them since I came back. But I had to try. Remember I told you about them, Charlie... what they could do? They could heal. I saw them do it a number of times before I went off to fight the Gravity Leviathan.

I thought maybe I could bring one of them here now. I thought maybe I could make everything better.

KZZZT

SHRAK

FATHER. YOU HAVE CALLED AT LAST!

WHA-- WHO ARE YOU?!

IN YOUR LANGUAGE MY TITLE WOULD ROUGHLY TRANSLATE TO "THE ANDROMEDEER." I AM YOUR PROGENY, FATHER. ONE OF ***YOUR*** CHILDREN.

MY CHILDREN?! I--I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE IMPLYING, BUT I NEVER--

I AM SPEAKING METAPHORICALLY OF COURSE. WE WERE *INSPIRED* BY YOU, FATHER.

IN THE YEARS SINCE YOU VISITED US, WE HAVE LEARNED TO MODEL OURSELVES ON *YOUR EXAMPLE.*

I'M SORRY, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS!

DO NOT FRET, FATHER. WE HAVE WAITED SO LONG FOR YOU TO CALL TO US AGAIN.

WE HAVE BEEN WAITING AND WE ARE *READY* FOR YOU NOW. LET ME *SHOW YOU...*

HOOOOOLD ONNNNN! JUSSSSSST WAAAAAAAA AAAAAAIT--

SHRACK

TOO LATE, FATHER. WE ARE ALREADY HERE.

LOOK, I CAME TO SEE YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE, BUT I DO NOT WANT TO GO ANYWHERE NEAR THAT BLACK HOLE AGAIN! LAST TIME I--

YOU LOST. MUCH TIME. YES. WE KNOW. DO NOT WORRY. THE ***GRAVITY LEVIATHAN*** REMAINS VERY MUCH DEAD. THERE WILL BE NO NEED TO GO BACK THERE.

HOLD ON! HOW ARE WE TALKING?! LAST TIME I WAS HERE YOU DIDN'T KNOW MY LANGUAGE.

WE HAVE BEEN OBSERVING YOUR PLANET. OBSERVING ***YOU.*** WE HAVE LEARNED MANY THINGS. AND WE HAVE BEEN PREPARING.

PREPARING? PREPARING FOR WHAT?

FOR THE DAY YOU WOULD SEE FIT TO COME BACK TO US. TO LEAD US. AND IT IS NOT JUST ***THIS WORLD*** WHO HAVE LEARNED FROM YOUR EXAMPLE, FATHER. WE HAVE RECRUITS FROM ACROSS THE UNIVERSE.

I tell you, Charlie. I've seen some things in my day. But what I saw there--well, nothing could have prepared me for that.

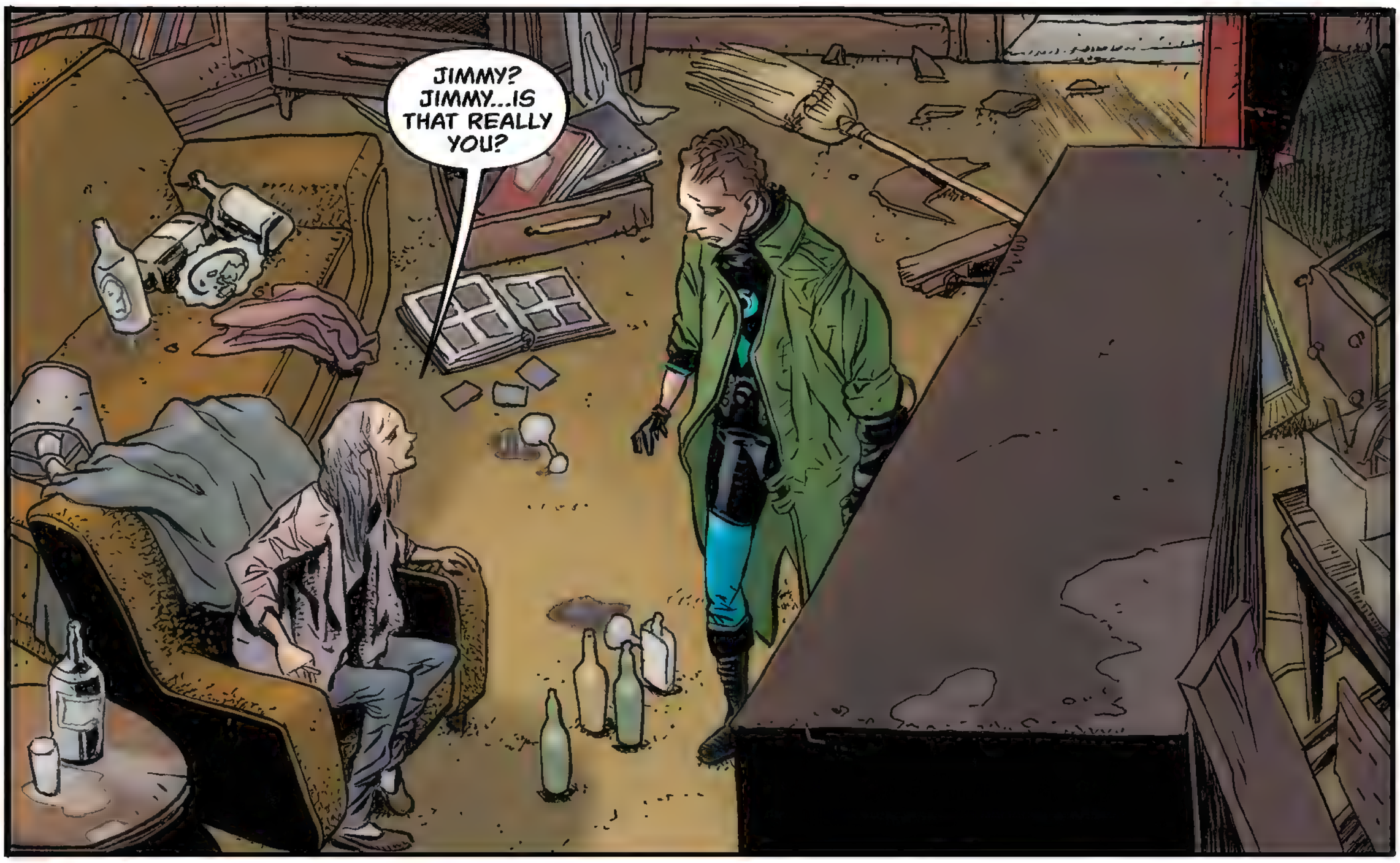
RECRUITS? I DON'T--

ALL HAIL THE FATHER!

MAY YOUR LIGHT SHINE BRIGHT FOR INFINITY!

THESE ARE YOUR CHILDREN, FATHER...THIS IS THE ANDROMEDA ARMADA!

1969


JIMMY? JIMMY...IS THAT REALLY YOU?

JOANIE... I--

YOU-- YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED. YOU LOOK THE SAME.
I KNOW. I MADE A MISTAKE, JOAN. I MADE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.

I'M SO SORRY, I--
YOU BASTARD!
SWAK

I DIDN'T KNOW, JOAN--I WENT TOO CLOSE TO A BLACK HOLE. THE GRAVITY...TIME SLOWED.

A BLACK HOLE?! A *BLACK FUCKING HOLE?!*

SPARE ME, JIMMY! I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT! YOU LEFT. BOTTOM LINE YOU LEFT US!

JOAN, ARE YOU--ARE YOU DRUNK?

GIVE ME A BREAK. WHAT I AM IS NONE OF YOUR GOD DAMN BUSINESS ANYMORE!

JOANIE, PLEASE.

WHERE IS *CHARLIE,* JOAN?

OH, NOW YOU CARE? TWENTY YEARS LATER, YOU SUDDENLY CARE?

IT'S ONLY BEEN EIGHTEEN YEARS, JOAN.

ONLY EIGHTEEN? *ONLY* EIGHTEEN?!

I DIDN'T MEAN IT THAT WAY. LOOK, WHERE IS HE, JOAN? WHERE IS CHARLIE?

HE'S GONE.

GONE WHERE?

THE *WAR,* JIMMY. HE WENT TO THE WAR.

WE'RE AT WAR AGAIN?! THE RUSSIANS?

VIETNAM, JIMMY! HE'S GONE TO VIETNAM.

I--I HAVE TO GO. I HAVE TO FIND HIM. BUT I'LL BE--

DON'T EVEN SAY IT. NOT AGAIN.

I'M SORRY, JOAN.

SO AM I.

HE WON'T WANT TO SEE YOU, JIMMY. YOU'RE ***TOO LATE*** TO HELP HIM.

SHRAK

It did not take me long to realize that this war was not like the war I had known.

There would be no rallying the Liberty Squadron. No victory parades.

And Joan was right. I was too late to help you here.

You weren't even there anymore. You had already fought your war...

And you had already paid the price. Shrapnel in your arm had sent you home, but one look at you and I knew the real wounds were much deeper.

That was the first time I found you in a hospital, Charlie. Maybe it was an omen of things to come?

CHARLIE?

...

NURSE--I NEED THE NURSE. THIS IS--

IT'S ME, CHARLIE. IT'S REALLY ME. I'M BACK.

GET THE FUCK AWAY FROM ME!

CHARLIE--

NO. GET AWAY!

SON, IT'S ME. I--I DID SOMETHING IN SPACE, SOMETHING I SHOULDN'T HAVE AND I LOST TIME BUT--

THOK

UNGH!

YOU-- YOU'RE REAL. YOU'RE REALLY HERE.

YES, SON. I'M REAL.

I LOST TIME, SON. I NEVER MEANT TO BE GONE SO LONG.

LOOK AT YOU. GOD, JUST LOOK AT YOU. YOU'RE A--A GROWN MAN.

IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY NOW, SON. I CAN HELP YOU. I CAN TAKE YOU HOME.

TAKE ME HOME? ***TAKE ME HOME!?***

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ME! YOU HAVE NO FUCKING IDEA!

I KNOW THIS IS HARD TO UNDERSTAND, CHARLIE. IT'S HARD FOR ME TOO. BUT LET ME HELP YOU.

IT'S HARD ***FOR YOU?!***

ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME?!

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA!? ANY IDEA HOW LONG I ***WAITED*** FOR YOU TO COME HOME? HOW HARD I PRAYED? HOW MUCH I DREAMED YOU'D FLY BACK AND EVERYTHING WOULD BE OKAY?!

AND MOM! MOM WAITED TOO. SHE JUST SAT AND WAITED AND WAITED. SHE REFUSED TO BELIEVE YOU WERE DEAD. SHE KEPT TELLING ME YOU WOULD COME BACK.

I WISH YOU WERE DEAD. THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASIER! MAYBE THEN SHE COULD HAVE MOVED ON!

I KNOW. I KNOW I MADE A MISTAKE. BUT I'M HERE NOW.

AND WHAT? YOU'VE COME TO ***SAVE ME*** NOW, DAD? COME TO BE THE ***HERO?*** IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR THAT.

YOU MADE YOUR CHOICE. YOU WENT OFF ON YOUR BIG ADVENTURE. YOU LEFT US HERE ON OUR OWN!

COME ON, SON. AT LEAST LET ME TAKE YOU OUT OF HERE.

I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE WITH YOU. IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT TOO.

I never knew <u>how angry</u> a man could really be. What that anger could do. Not until that day.

But my mind is wandering again, Charlie. I was--I was talking about something else, wasn't I?

Oh yes, the Andromedeers. I was telling you about the Andromedeers, how could I forget?

FATHER, ARE YOU PLEASED?

PLEASED? I--I--

WHEN YOU CAME THE FIRST TIME, WHEN YOU SAVED US FROM THE GRAVITY LEVIATHAN, WE SAW WHAT A TRUE CHAMPION WAS...WHAT A TRUE WARRIOR WAS.

HOLD ON, HOLD ON. THIS IS--THIS IS INCREDIBLE. *YOU* ARE *ALL* INCREDIBLE. BUT--

I CAME HERE FOR A REASON. I CAME FOR *MY SON.*

HE IS SICK. HE IS VERY, VERY SICK.

YES. WE HAVE OBSERVED.

WELL, I KNOW THAT YOUR PEOPLE CAN *HEAL.* I SAW YOU DO IT MANY TIMES.

I NEED YOU TO HEAL HIM. I NEED YOU TO SAVE MY BOY.

THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE.

IMPOSSIBLE?! WHY? PLEASE!

YOUR EARTH BODIES COULD NOT POSSIBLY SURVIVE OUR HEALING PROCESS. IT IS NOT MEANT FOR YOU. WE ARE-- HOW DO YOU SAY-- INCOMPATIBLE.

I AM SORRY, FATHER. IF WE COULD HELP YOU AND YOUR BIRTH KIN, NOTHING WOULD MAKE US MORE PROUD...BUT IT CANNOT BE.

BUT FEAR NOT, FATHER. WE ARE YOUR CHILDREN NOW. WE ARE YOUR LEGACY.

YOU NEVER HAVE TO BE ALONE AGAIN. WE WILL BE YOUR FAMILY. WE WILL BE YOUR KIN. WE SHARE YOUR POWER. TOGETHER WE CAN EXPLORE THE UNIVERSE AND ALL ITS WONDERS.

WAIT, YOUR POWER. YOUR COSMIC GAUNTLETS...HOW DID YOU?

LET US SHOW YOU, FATHER.

SHOW ME? SHOW ME WHAT?

AS I SAID, WE OBSERVED YOU AND THEN TRIED TO REPLICATE THE EXPERIMENTS THAT GAVE YOU YOUR POWER. BUT WITH TIME WE DISCOVERED HOW TO DO MORE THAN THAT.

MORE THAN THAT?

SHRAK

WE HAVE FOUND *THE SOURCE*...WE HAVE ALSO FOUND THE PARA-ZONE!

ALL IT'S WONDERS ARE OPEN TO US NOW, TOO.

AND NOW IT CAN BE *YOURS* TOO, FATHER. THE INFINITE. THE *ANSWERS TO EVERYTHING.*

CHAPTER FOUR

It wasn't what I expected. I mean--I don't know how I could have <u>expected</u> anything specific. The Para-zone was the very definition of the unknown.

But I had touched it once, all those years ago, and stolen a piece of its power. I thought that was enough.

But seeing it there...open and waiting or me. I swear I've never wanted anything <u>so badly</u> in all my life. Charlie.

My whole damn life...

1971

My whole.

Damn.

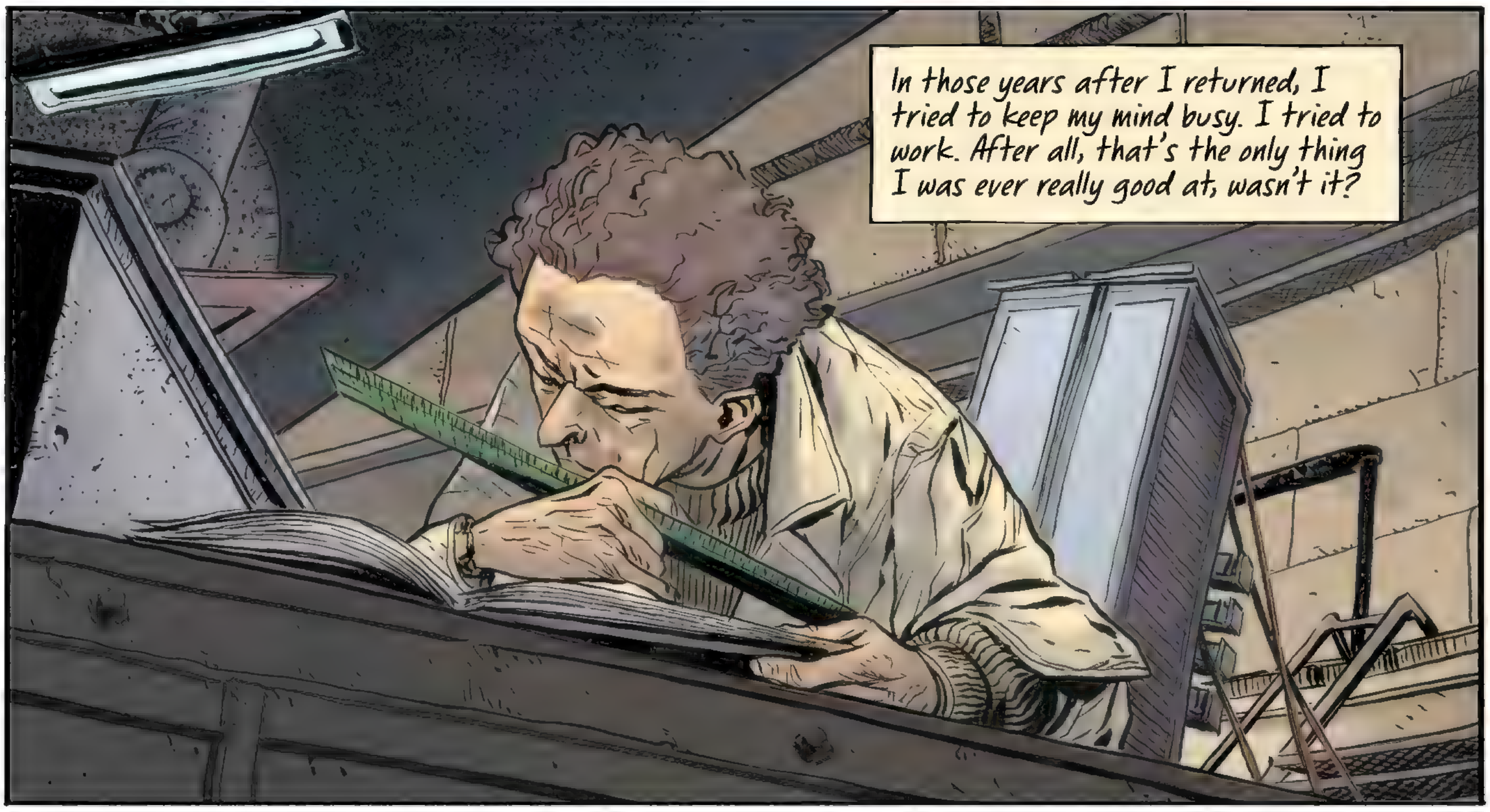
Life.

1975

Time is such a funny thing, isn't it?

How can so many years go so fast, and yet others feel like they drag on for an eternity?

1981


In those years after I returned, I tried to keep my mind busy. I tried to work. After all, that's the only thing I was ever really good at, wasn't it?

1984

I tried to stay in touch with your mother. My work, all my new patents--they could have made her life more comfortable. She could have gotten out of that old house. But she never returned my calls. She never opened my mail. She wouldn't see me.

It wasn't only space I gave up after I got back. I hung up my costume too.

Heck, the world didn't need me any more, Charlie. There were new heroes. New adventures. But they weren't meant for me.

Every time the phone rang I hoped it might be you...

RRIIING

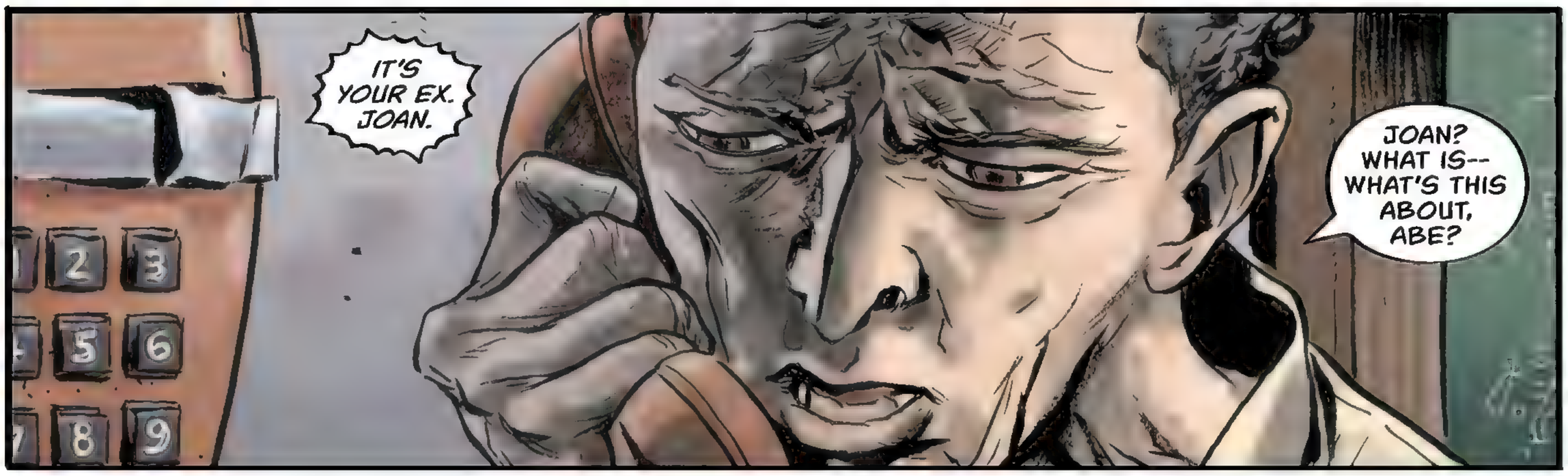
But it never was.

HELLO?

JIMMY? JIMMY ROBINSON?

YES. WHO IS--

IT'S ABE. ABE SLAM. LOOK, JIMMY, I HATE TO CALL YOU OUT OF NOWHERE LIKE THIS BUT, WELL...I HAVE SOME BAD NEWS.


IT'S YOUR EX. JOAN.
JOAN? WHAT IS-- WHAT'S THIS ABOUT, ABE?
WELL, I SORT OF KEPT AN EYE ON HER FOR YOU, DOC. AFTER YOU LEFT AND ALL. JUST SORT OF CHECKING IN AND--WELL, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TELL YOU THIS, JIMMY.
JOANIE DIED LAST NIGHT.

I--I hate to admit this, Charlie, but I felt like Joan died long before that. And I know that is, at least in part, my fault.

The Joan I knew disappeared when I was off in space. When I came back the woman I found was--she was a shell.

I don't know what happened to her to make her like that. I don't know what things she endured, what shape her life took without me.

I don't know what happened to her when I was away to make you both hate me so much.

I tried to reconnect with her so many times after I returned. Tried to help her. Tried to find out what went wrong...

...But she wouldn't let me back in. And now you'll never be able to tell me either.

I guess I'll never know. A mystery I can't uncover. A problem I can't solve.

While I was away chasing my mysteries in space, indulging my boyhood fantasies, your boyhood was slipping away.

Only moments for me, but a lifetime of hurt and pain for you. A lifetime I wasn't here to save you from.

And I just left your mother to try and navigate that life with you. I was off exploring new societies and seeing wonders no man had ever seen, and she--

Hell, who am I kidding, I left her long before that, didn't I? I was always in my lab. I was always working and she was--she was waiting.

And finally that waiting got to be too much, and I guess she collapsed under the weight of it.

Hell. Listen to me blabber. Like I know something, Charlie. Like I have it all figured out.

Truth is, I don't know anything. All those years of searching and I'm just as lost as the day I started.

I tried to go back to work, but my heart just wasn't in it anymore. It had all passed me by. I had no hunger.

So I closed up the old place. I let the dust in. Let it settle on my old bones. And I moved away.

I found somewhere quiet. Somewhere where I could really be alone.

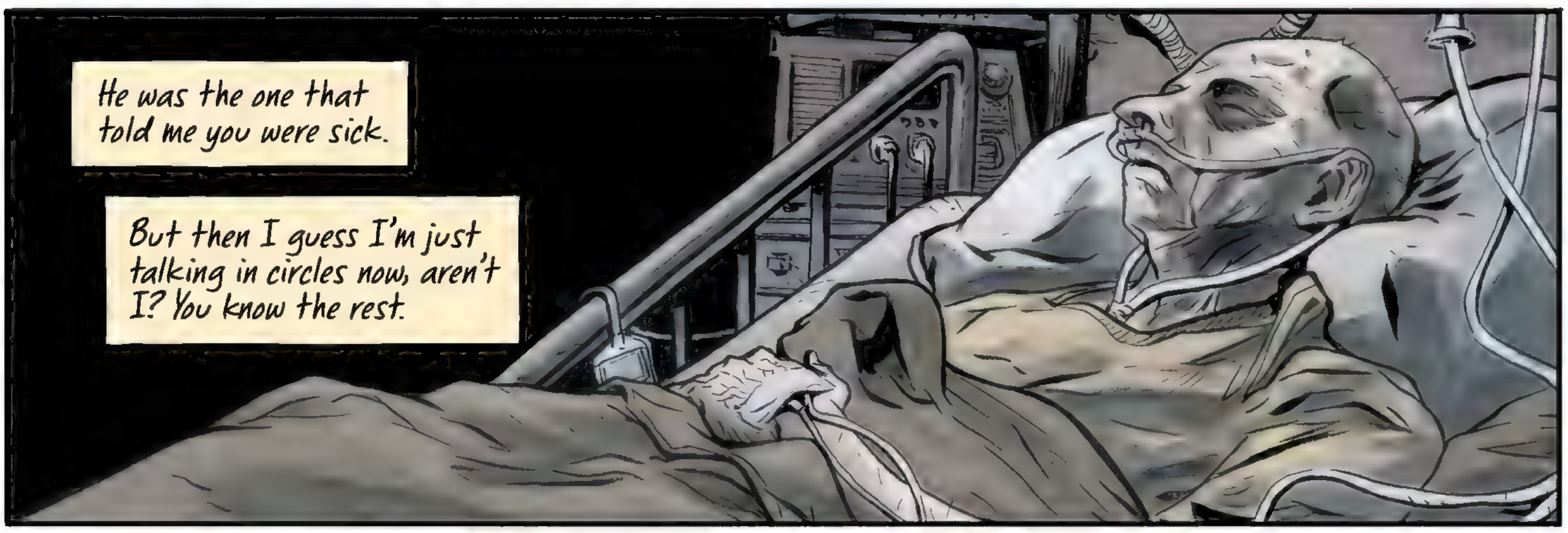
I wouldn't say I was happy there. But I wasn't unhappy either. I just...was.

The days passed. I was still here. Nothing more. Nothing less.

I admit I often thought of just leaving. Just going off to the stars and never coming back. But something held me in place. Something was weighing me down.

I guess now the weight of my own life had caught up to me.

Anyway, one day last week I had a visitor. An old friend. (Why is it Abe only shows up with bad news?)
DOC...


He was the one that told me you were sick.
But then I guess I'm just talking in circles now, aren't I? You know the rest.

I came back here. I tried to see you.
Then I went to space. I went to space to find a cure for you only to be disappointed again. The Aliens couldn't help you any more than I could.
But they did show me something else...

...They showed me the doorway to everything.

ALL THESE THINGS ARE IN THE PAST, FATHER. THE PAST CANNOT BE UNDONE. THAT IS THE ONE CONSTANT.

YOUR BIRTH SON WILL SOON DIE, FATHER. THIS IS THE WAY OF THINGS. YOU CANNOT SAVE HIM. THERE IS NO REASON LEFT FOR YOU TO RETURN TO EARTH.

BUT THERE IS SO MUCH STILL *AHEAD* OF YOU.

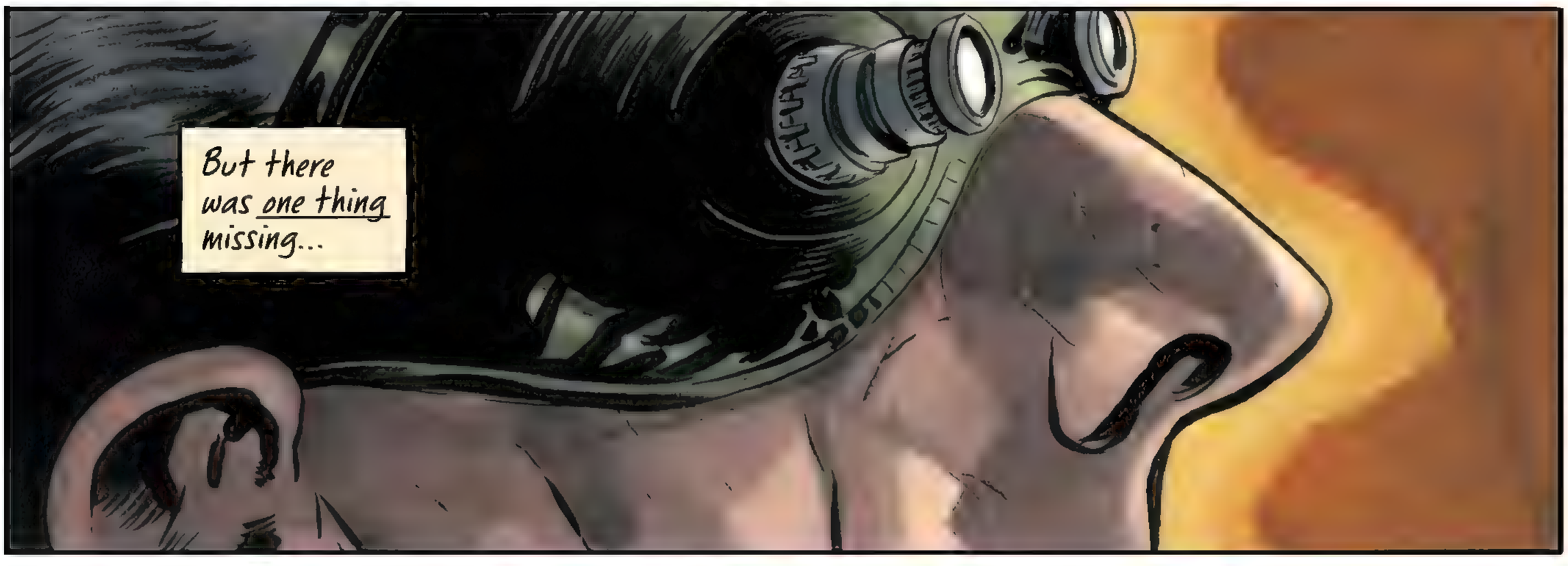
TOGETHER WE CAN UNCOVER MIRACLES. TOGETHER WE CAN CHANGE THE UNIVERSE AND UNRAVEL ALL OF ITS MYSTERIES.

JOIN US, FATHER. LEAD US INTO THE UNKNOWN.

After years of searching it was right there, just waiting for me to step through.

A doorway to the infinite, Charlie.

My heart's desire. Everything I ever wanted.


But there was one thing missing...

NOW.

...AND THAT'S WHY I'M HERE NOW, CHARLIE. THAT'S WHY I'M TELLING YOU ALL OF THIS.

I CAME BACK. I KNOW IT'S TOO LATE. BUT I CAME BACK TO YOU.

AND I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT ME HERE. I KNOW THAT I SHOULDN'T BE HERE AT ALL. BUT I HAD TO COME. ONE LAST TIME.

I HAD TO TELL YOU EVERYTHING. JUST ONCE, I HAD TO TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED TO ME. WHY THINGS WENT THE WAY THEY DID.

AND NOW I'VE SAID IT. I'VE TOLD YOU MY STORY. SO I WILL LEAVE YOU ALONE NOW. I'LL HONOR YOUR WISHES.

BUT I WISH--I WISH I'D NEVER LEFT. I WISH I'D NEVER GONE TO THE STARS.

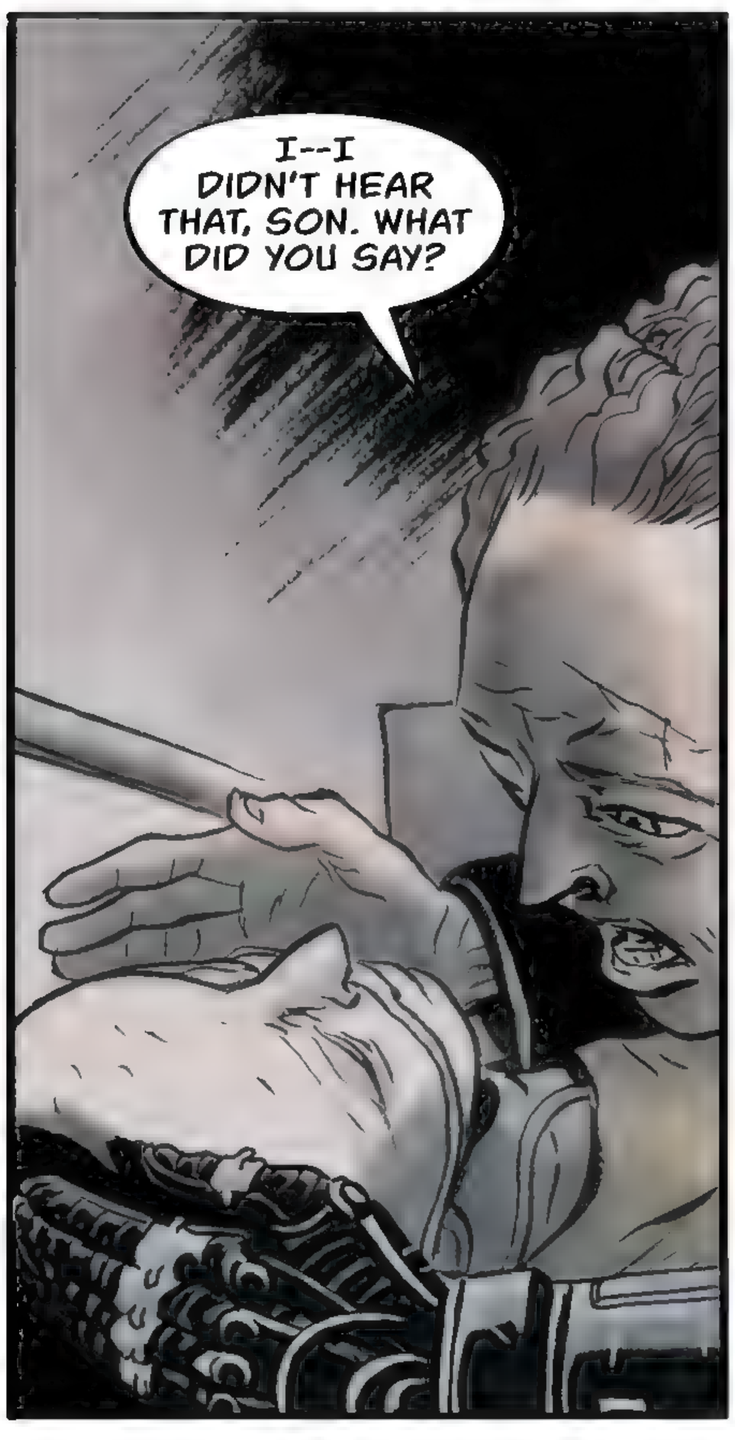
I WISH I'D STAYED, SON. I WISH THAT MORE THAN ANYTHING.

I'D WISH I'D JUST TAKEN YOU FLYING WITH ME.

D--
DAD?

YES! IT'S ME, CHARLIE. I'M HERE.

TAKE ME NOW.


I--I DIDN'T HEAR THAT, SON. WHAT DID YOU SAY?

TAKE ME NOW, DAD... I'M READY.

You're ready.

You're ready so I pick you up and I take you into the sky with me at last.

I look down once and I see a slight smile on your face, Charlie.

And it feels good.

It feels like I've gone back in time.

Then I feel you start to go limp. I feel your frail body shudder and I know that time has caught up to us.

Here I thought I was done talking, but in that instant I want to say so much, Charlie.
I want to tell you I'm sorry.
I want to tell you I love you.
But of course there is no sound here...there are no more words...

There is only me...
Me and you.
My son. My little boy in my arms...

...The way it was always supposed to be.

THE END

JEFF LEMIRE
DAVID RUBÍN

SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN™

SKETCHBOOK

Notes by Jeff Lemire and David Rubín

JEFF LEMIRE: The character of Sherlock Frankenstein was just a name at first, a silly combination of two classic characters from literature. Then, when writing *Black Hammer*, I turned him into one of the bad guys, a Victorian zombie-genius type that Golden Gail could fight. In his original appearance in *Black Hammer #2*, Sherlock is much more ghoulish-looking. Later, when I decided I wanted to have him become Gail's love interest, I asked Dean to tone down the ghoul and turn up the Victorian gentleman look a bit, which led us to this design and then also led to the spark of the idea for this spinoff series.

JL: One of the great joys of *Black Hammer*, aside from my love of the core characters themselves, is the world building I get to do. I have eighty years of comic book and superhero history to draw from, so there is just so much raw material to inspire me. I really wanted to start to color in the world of *Black Hammer* here and really start to lay down its history. There can't be a superhero universe without a World War II–era super team. It's a classic element of superhero history that harkens back to *The Invaders* at Marvel and *The Justice Society* at DC. So I set out to build my own version with the Liberty Squadron.

Some of these characters popped up pretty quickly like the husband and wife team of Captain Night and Doctor Day. While others I've been kicking around in sketchbooks and notebooks for over a decade, like "the haunted spectre of the prairies," the Horseless Rider. But none of these characters came to life until David designed them. David is a genius and he instantly imbued my ideas with life and energy.

DETAIL:

RUBBER'S MADE, NO METAL. NO LIKE OLD IRON MAN GLOBES!

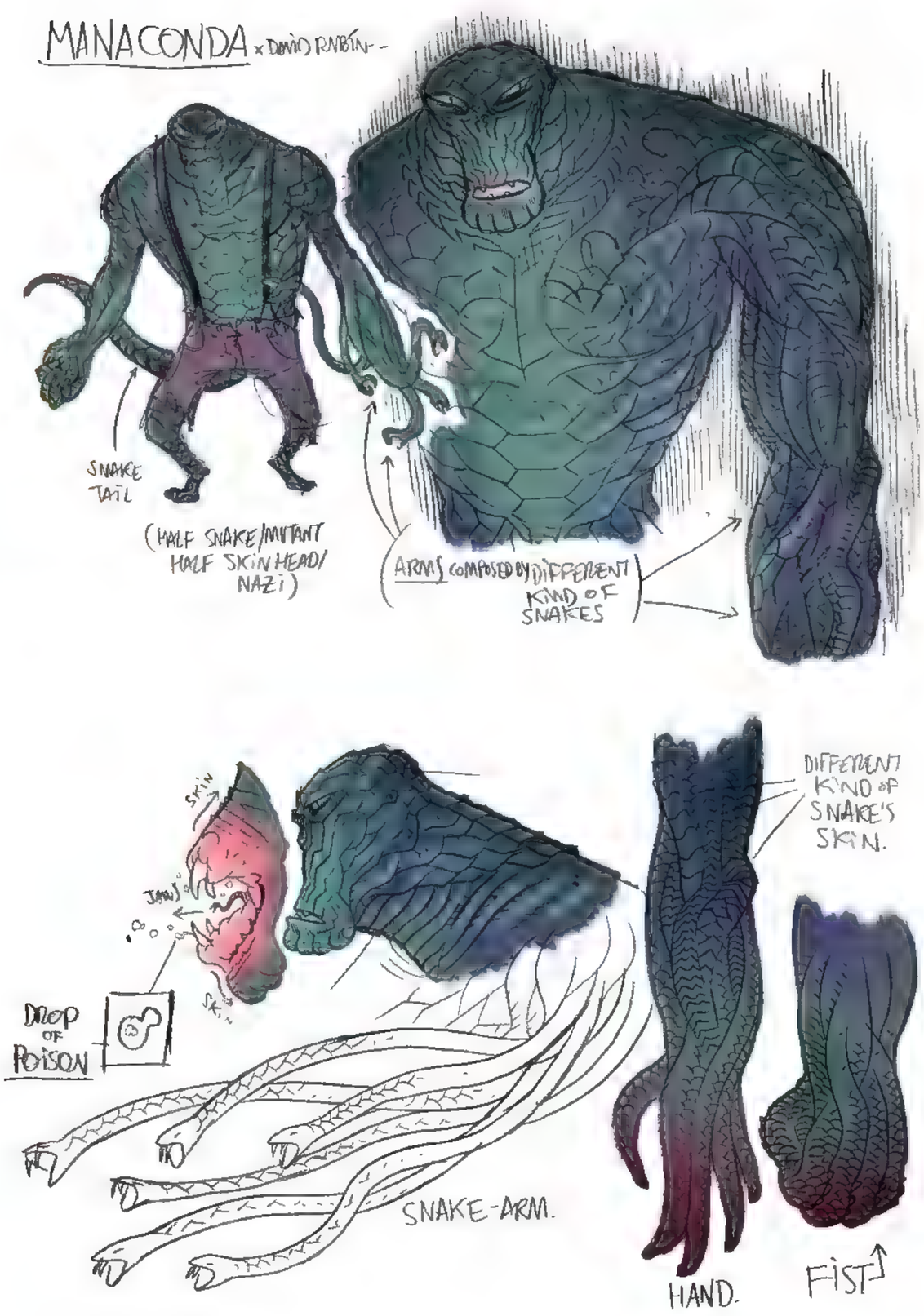
BEHIND THE TECH-GLOBES, NEBULA SUIT'S OTHER GLOBES, MADE FROM RUBBER, IT PROTECT HIS HANDS FROM THE HIGH TEMPERATURE OF THE TECH-GLOBES WHEN HE'S IN ACTION.

-CAPTAIN NIGHT-

-DR. DAY-

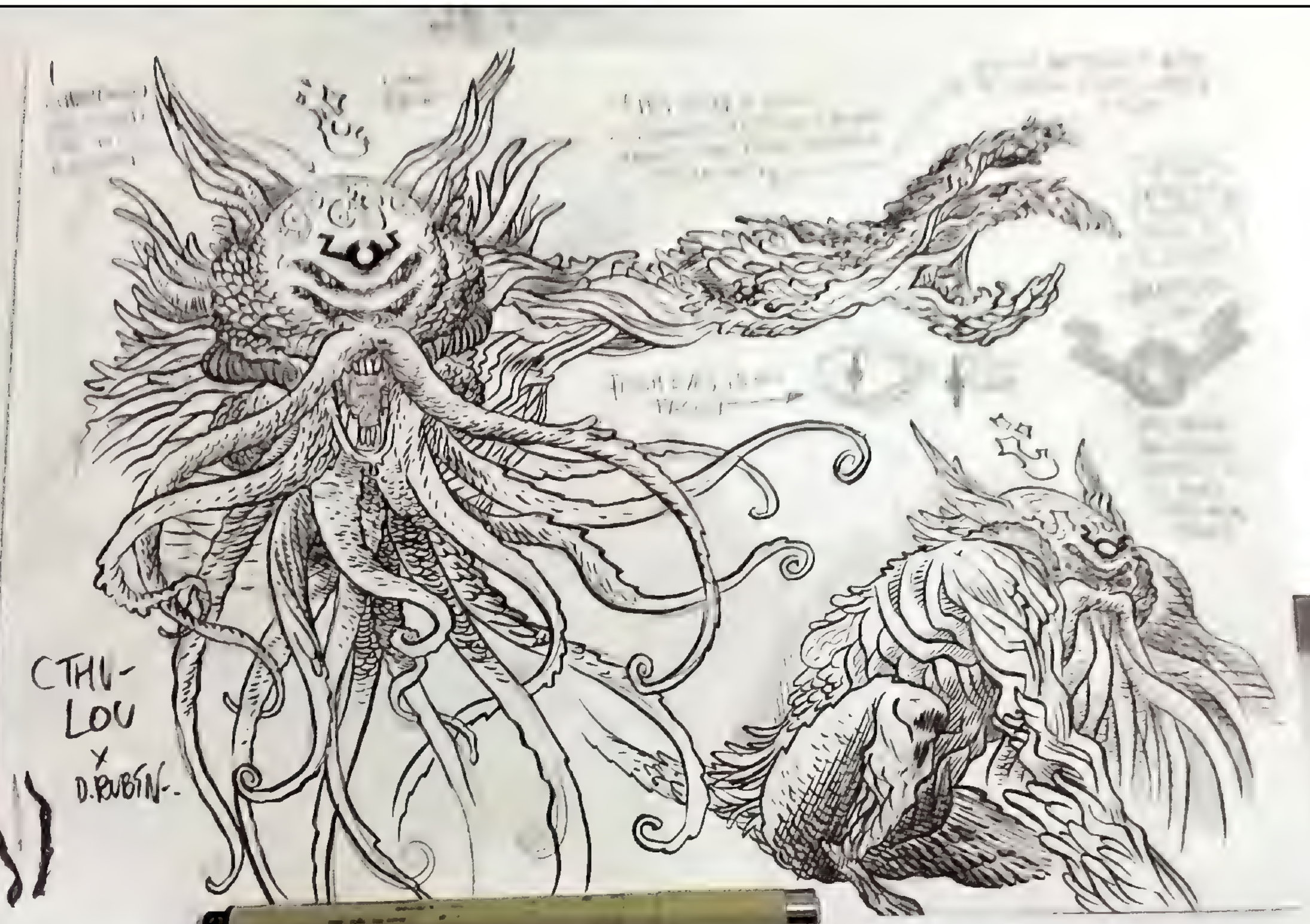
DAVID RUBÍN

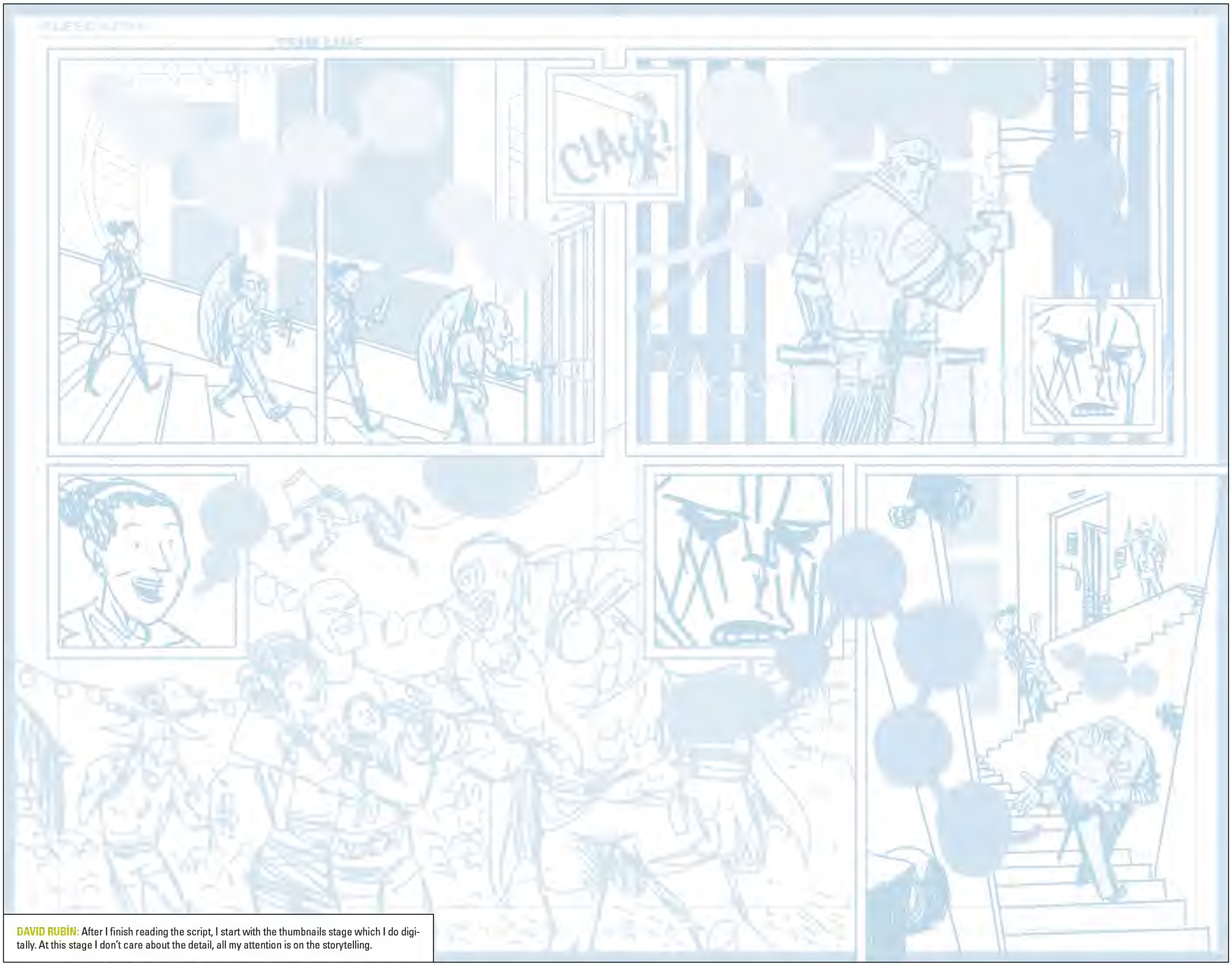
JL: You can't have a book about a bad guy without some other bad guys. I had a few that already appeared in *Black Hammer*, like Metal Minotaur and Cthu-Lou, but I needed more. I literally just started writing down funny or evocative names, picked the best three or four and sent them off to David without any instruction. The rest is all him. I love these guys, especially Tenterhooks and GrimJim and expect to use them all again.



JL: Concretestador was a name that Canadian comedian Brett Butt threw out to me on Twitter one day. So he is to blame for that one. My son Gus came up with the name Metal Minotaur.

-CONCRETESTADOR-
DAVID RUBIN-





DAVID RUBÍN: After I finish reading the script, I start with the thumbnails stage which I do digitally. At this stage I don't care about the detail, all my attention is on the storytelling.

YOU ARE TOO KIND, MS. WEBER.

BUT THOSE DAYS ARE LONG BEHIND ME.

THESE DAYS I'M HAPPY TO BE THE WARDEN HERE.

TO HELP KEEP AS MANY OF THESE SUPERCREEPS BEHIND BARS AS I CAN.

AND I HAVE TO SAY, WE DON'T LET JUST ANYBODY PAST THE FRONT GATES.

I KNOW, AND APPRECIATE IT, WARDEN.

REALLY

ANYTHING FOR JOE M'BOTA'S GIRL

BESIDES, THIS FACILITY IS ALREADY CURSED, SO WE CAN SPEND OF MONEY ON MY OWN DAMN TIME.

CLACK!

HOW I'LL SPEND ALL OF THIS JAIL EDUCATION IS TO STOP WITH THE PHILOSOPHY.

I'M GOING TO HAVE MY BEST MAN ACCOMPANY YOU JUST IN CASE

MS. WEBER MEET--

THE CONCIERGE-BOT!

WOW!

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT YOU WORKED HERE TOO!

I DON'T GO BY THAT NAME ANYMORE.

YOU CAN CALL ME OFFICER LÓPEZ.

CLACKITTY-CLACK!!!

OH, UM, SORRY

SURE

HIP!

YOU KNOW, I THINK I ACTUALLY MET YOU ONCE WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL.

HUMP!

I DON'T REMEMBER THAT.

IT WAS AT ONE OF ARMAND SLAM'S NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY I THINK.

ANYWAY, LET'S JUST GET GOING

THE INMATES HAVE JUST BEEN FED.

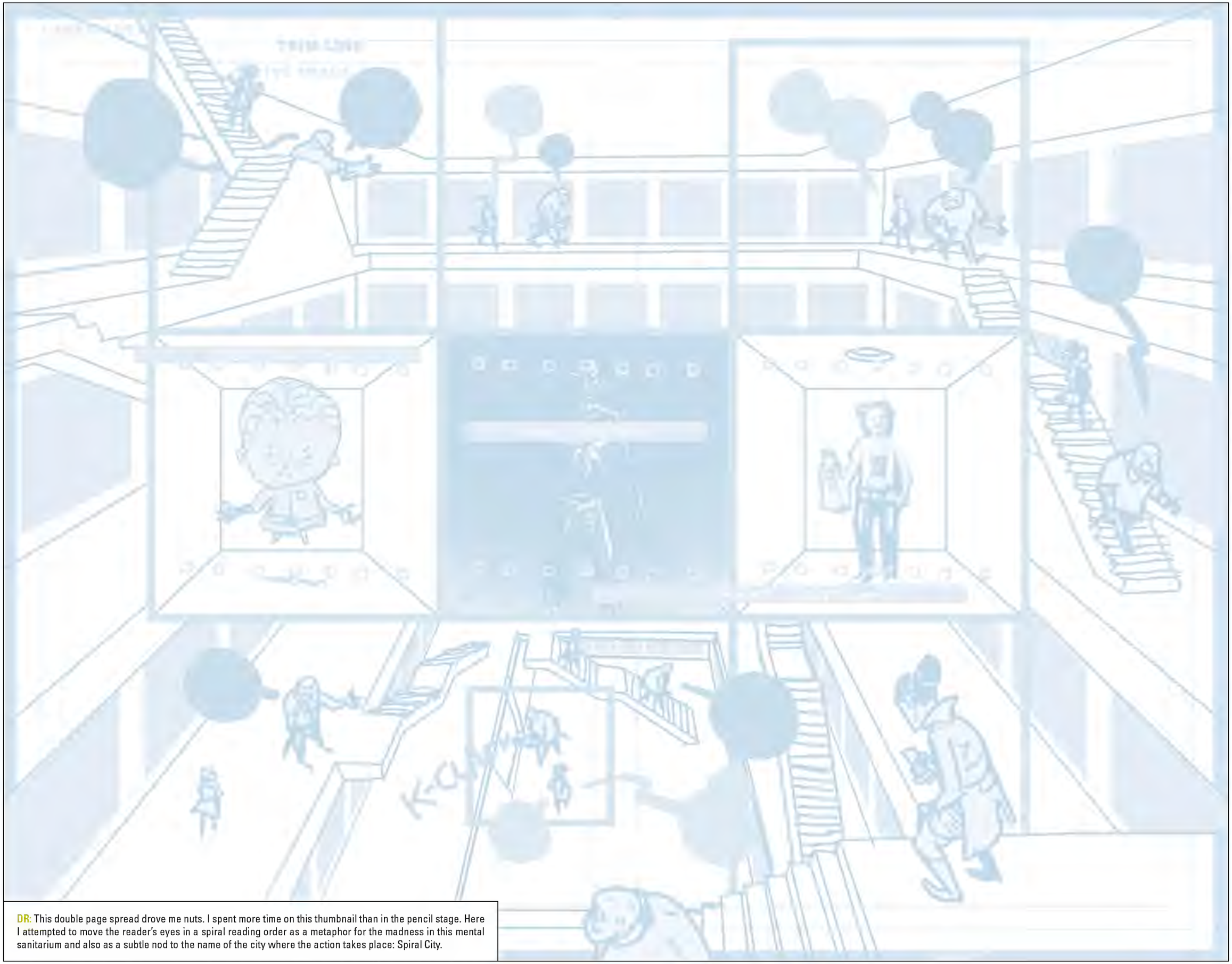
IN MY EXPERIENCE THEY ARE LESS VOLATILE RIGHT AFTER A MEAL.

UH OKAY SURE

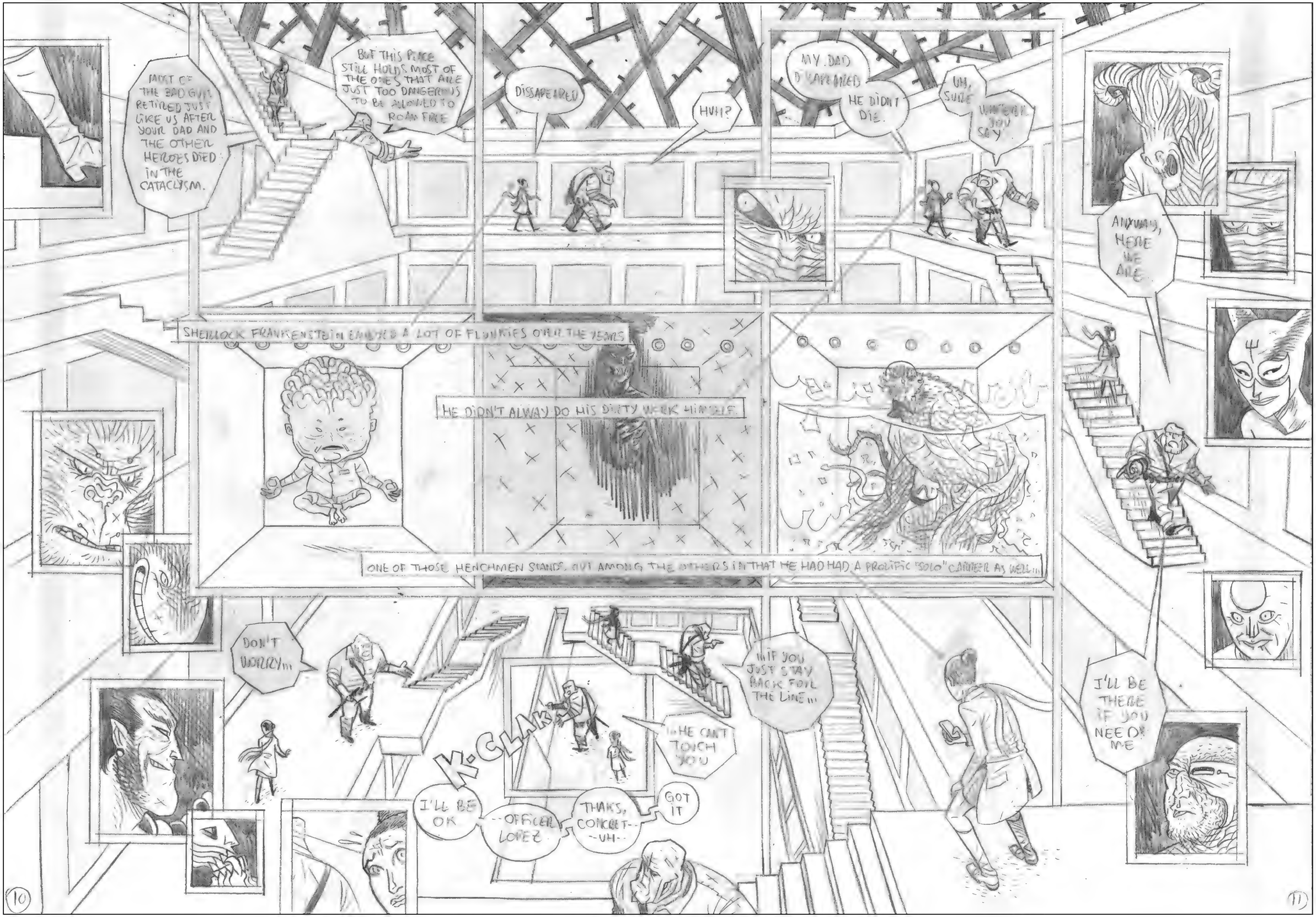
8

9

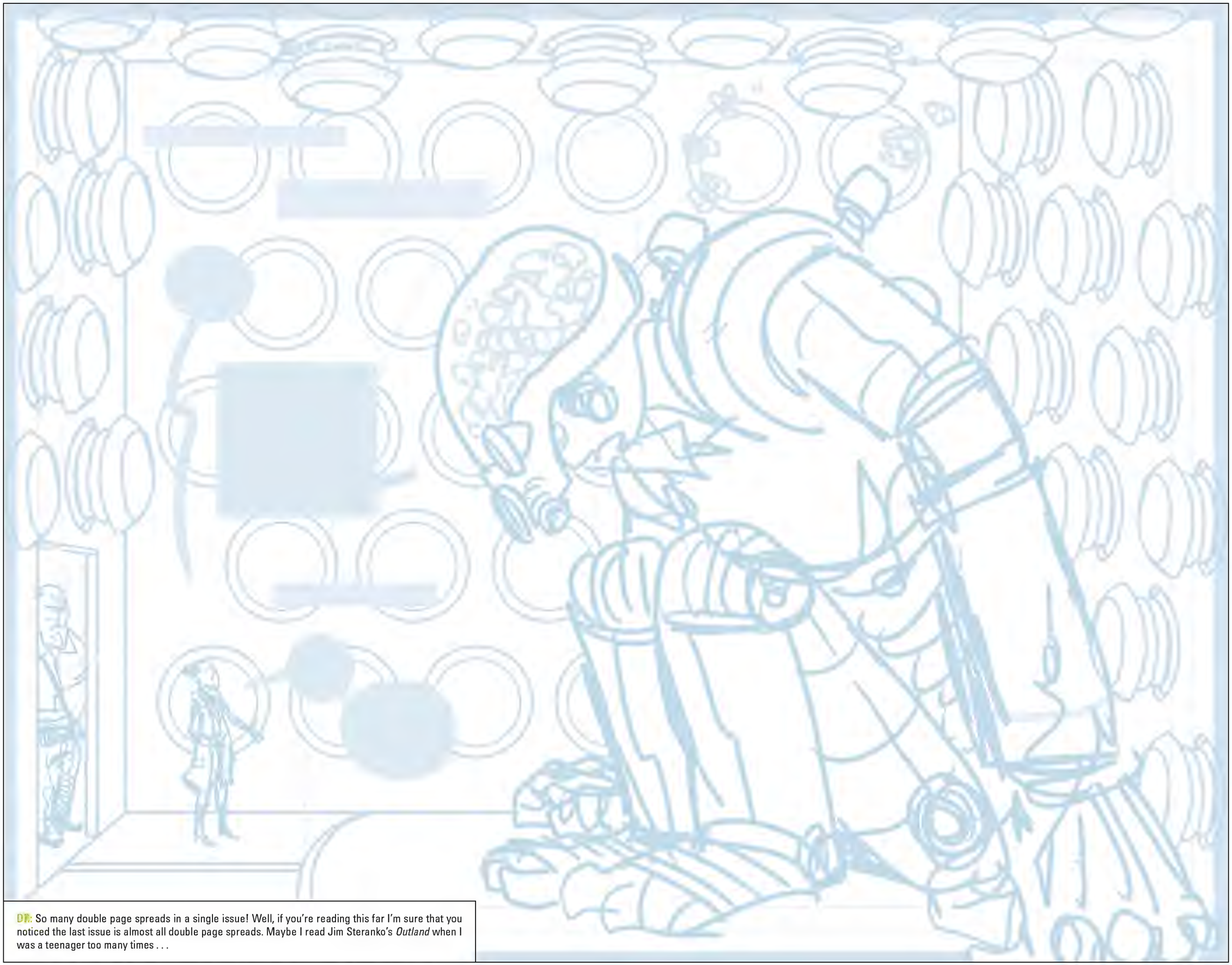
DR: Here's the same double page spread, but now with pencil art. This first issue was the last issue that I did with traditional pencil art. The rest of issues of the miniseries are completely done with digital art, from the rough layouts to the final colors. I hope that you don't see the difference.



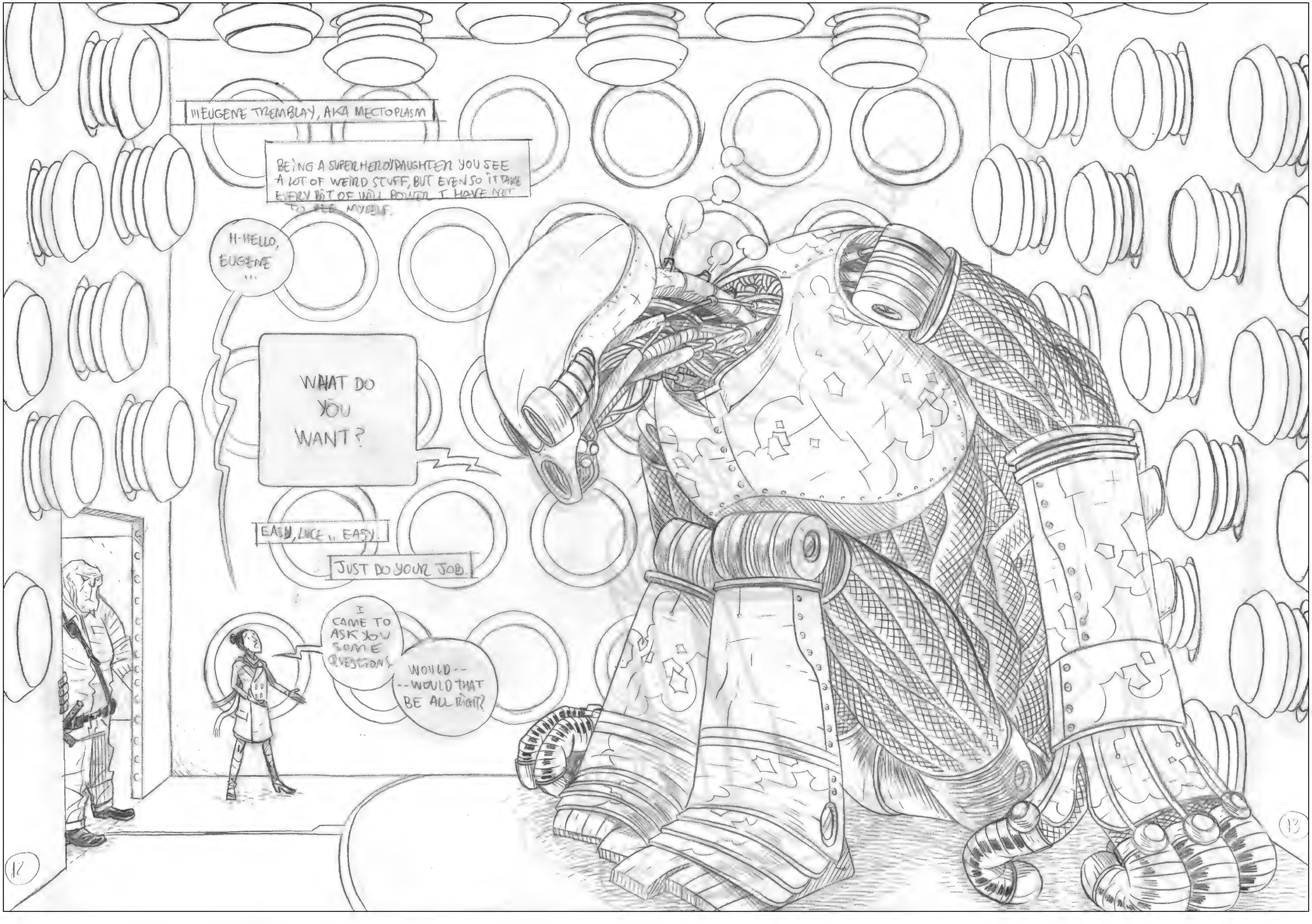
DR: This double page spread drove me nuts. I spent more time on this thumbnail than in the pencil stage. Here I attempted to move the reader's eyes in a spiral reading order as a metaphor for the madness in this mental sanitarium and also as a subtle nod to the name of the city where the action takes place: Spiral City.



DR: Here's the pencil art for the same spread as before. I added little insert panels that I thought helped me find the way to move the reader in the spiral direction, and also showed some of the undesirable "tenants" of the sanitarium.



DR: So many double page spreads in a single issue! Well, if you're reading this far I'm sure that you noticed the last issue is almost all double page spreads. Maybe I read Jim Steranko's *Outland* when I was a teenager too many times . . .



DR: After the previous double page spread, I thought we needed some air; a large image that would give the reader a bit of eye rest, and serve to show the monstrous Mectoplasm.

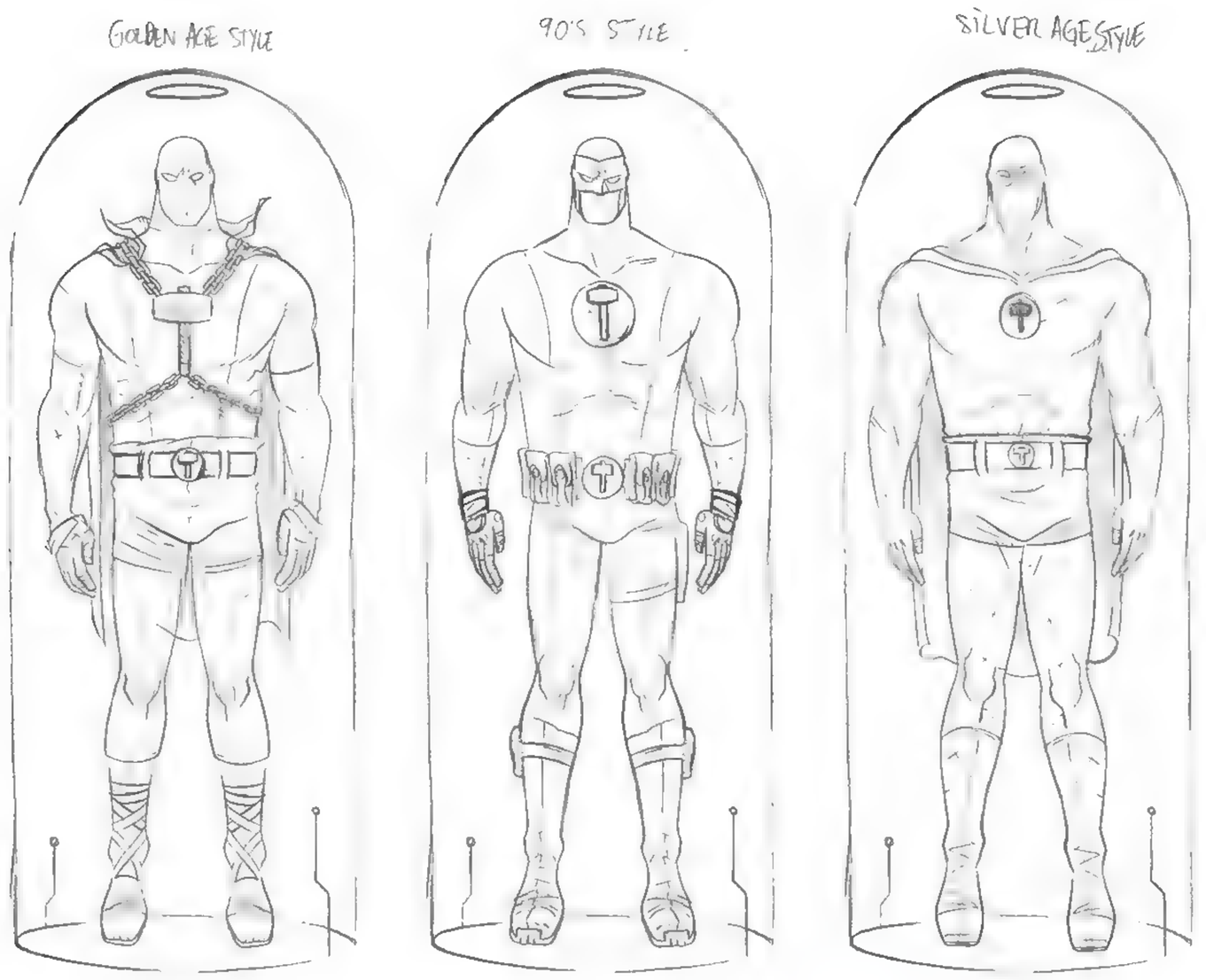
DR: This flashback sequence was so much fun to draw! The ideas that Jeff described in the script were so pulpy and gritty: slum warehouses, gangs robbing them, a criminally insane villain, and a super powerful GIANT ROBOT! The dream of every cartoonist! I deserved another double page for sure!

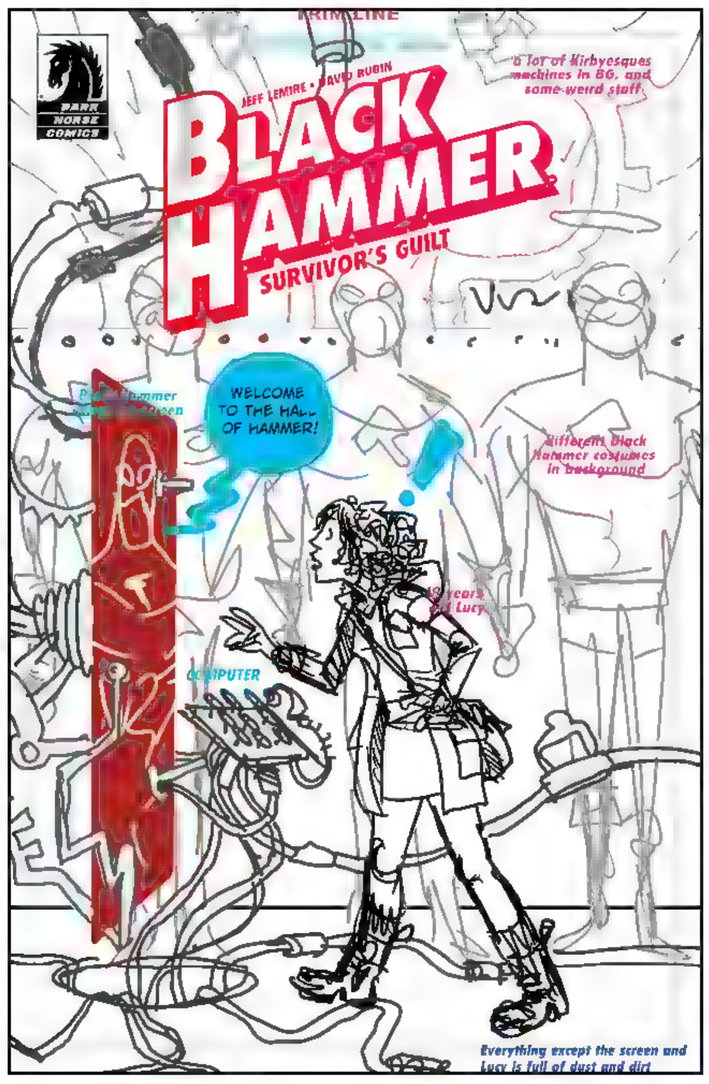
DR: You can't see it in these pencil pages, because I introduce it in Photoshop in the color stage, but GrimJim wears a Britney Spears t-shirt. I think that it is the most powerful evidence that he's an evil and mad criminal mind, for sure! Apologies to Britney's fans!

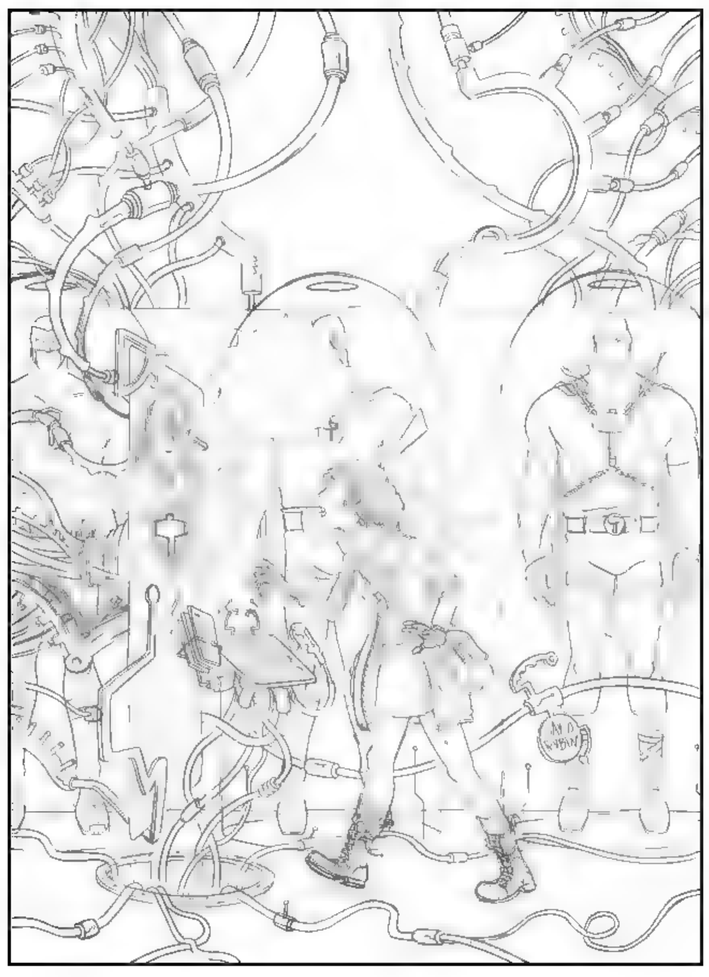
SHERLOCK FRANKENSTEIN!!!
THE CRAZY OLD BUZZARD WAS HEADED RIGHT TOWARDS IT!

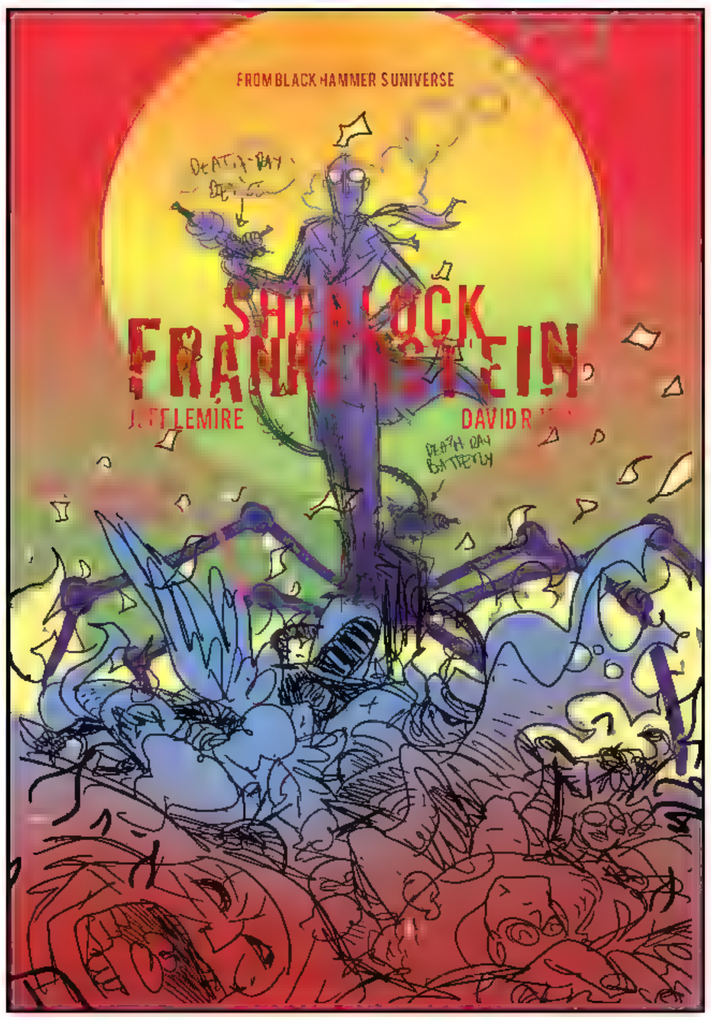
DR: Here's the art process from roughs to inks for the cover for *Black Hammer* #12. That issue originally served as a prequel of the *Sherlock Frankenstein* miniseries and is the first chapter of this collection.

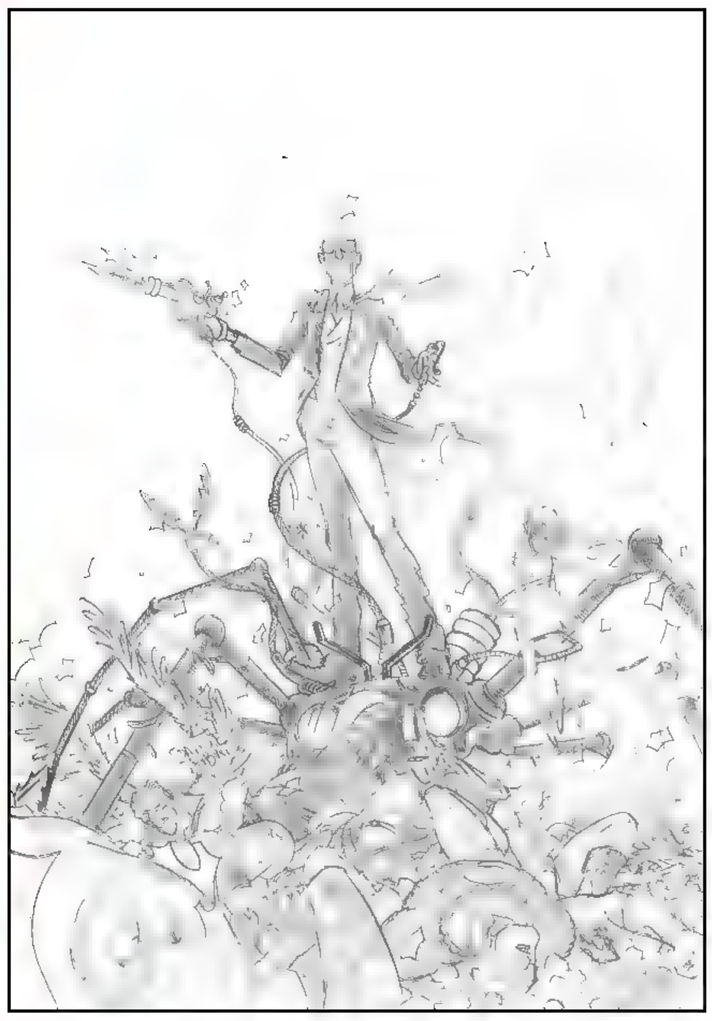
Also shown here are different Black Hammer suits I designed for the background of the cover. You can see the variety of the Black Hammer suits here for the Golden Age, the Silver Age and the 90s style.

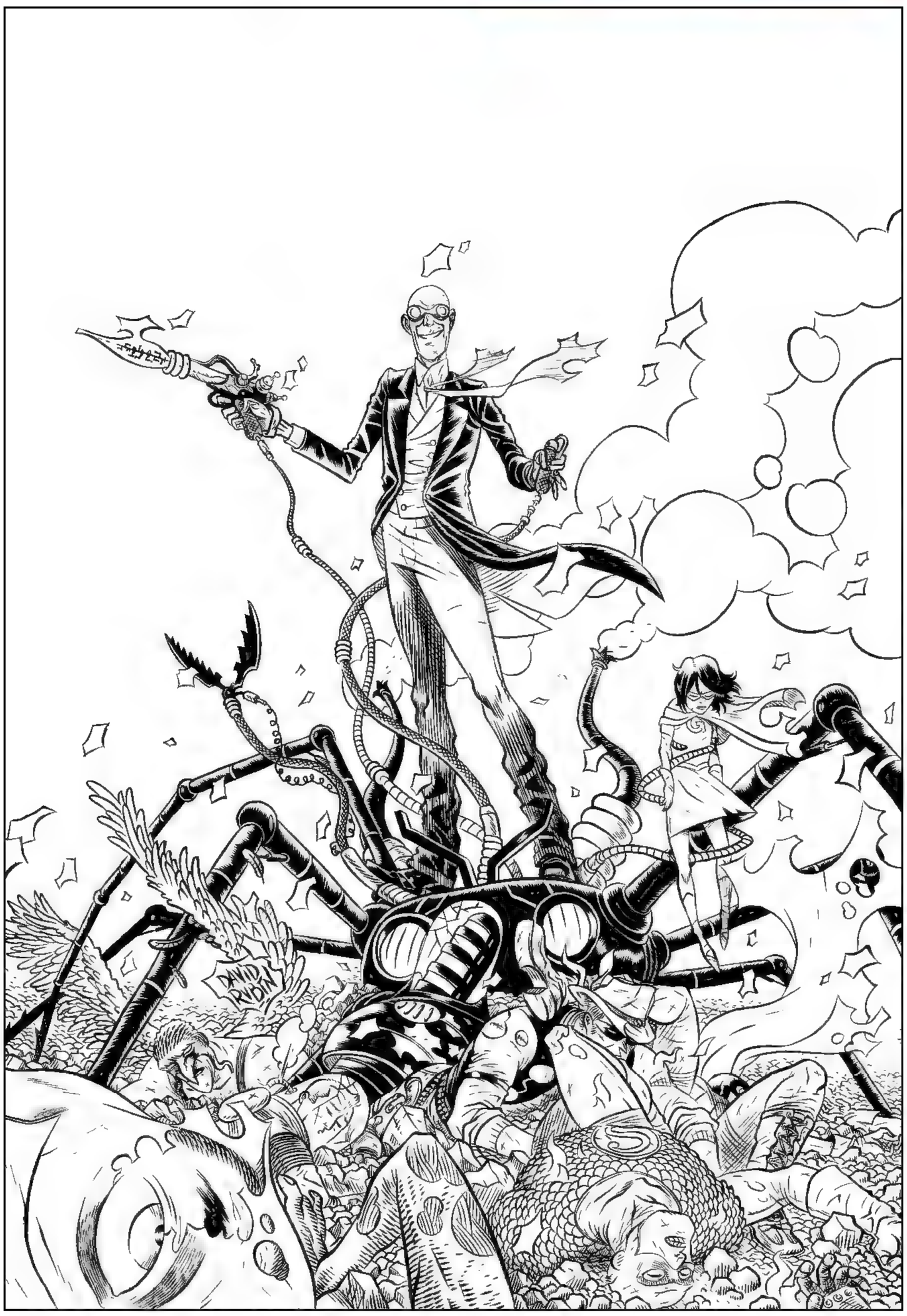




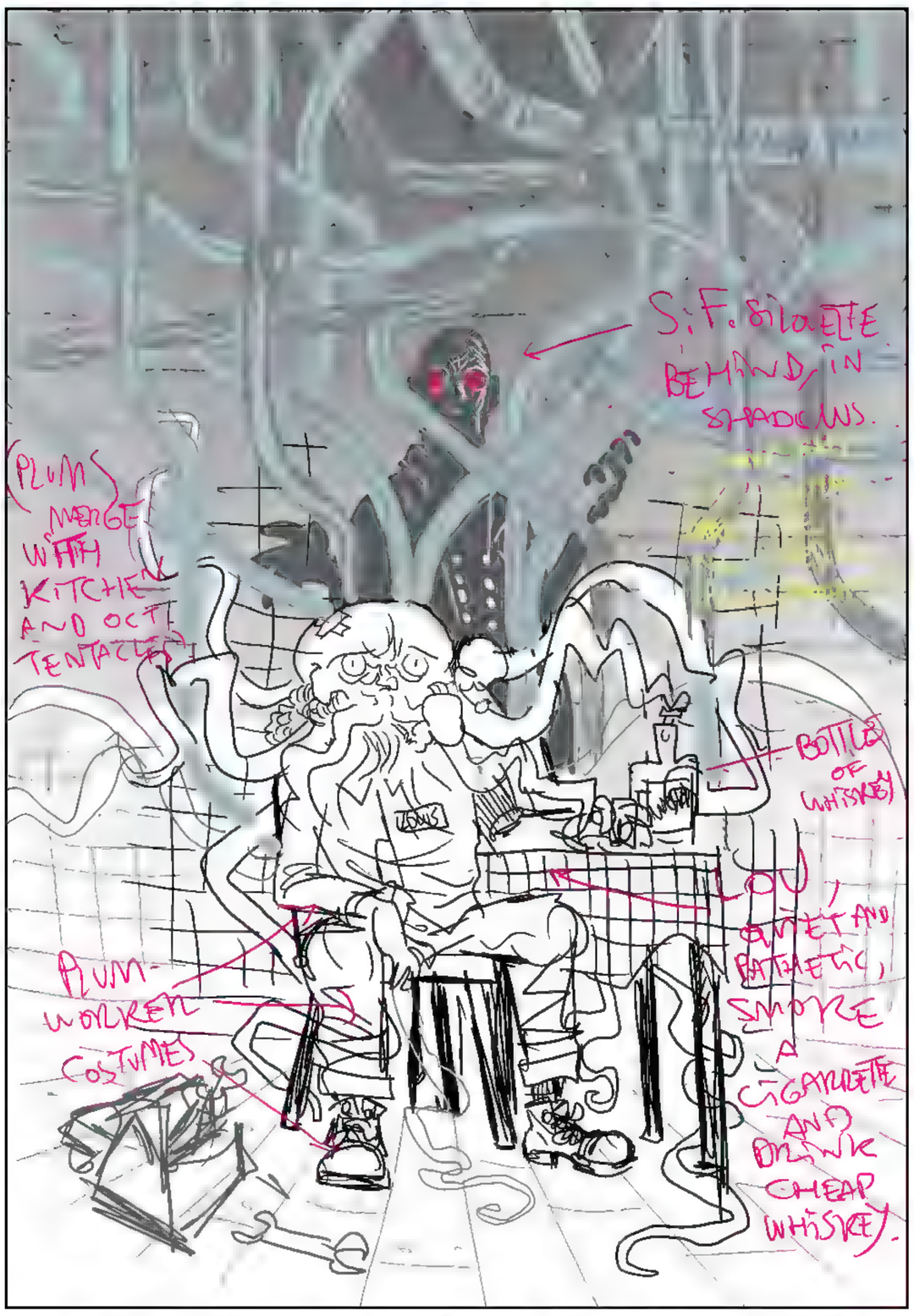


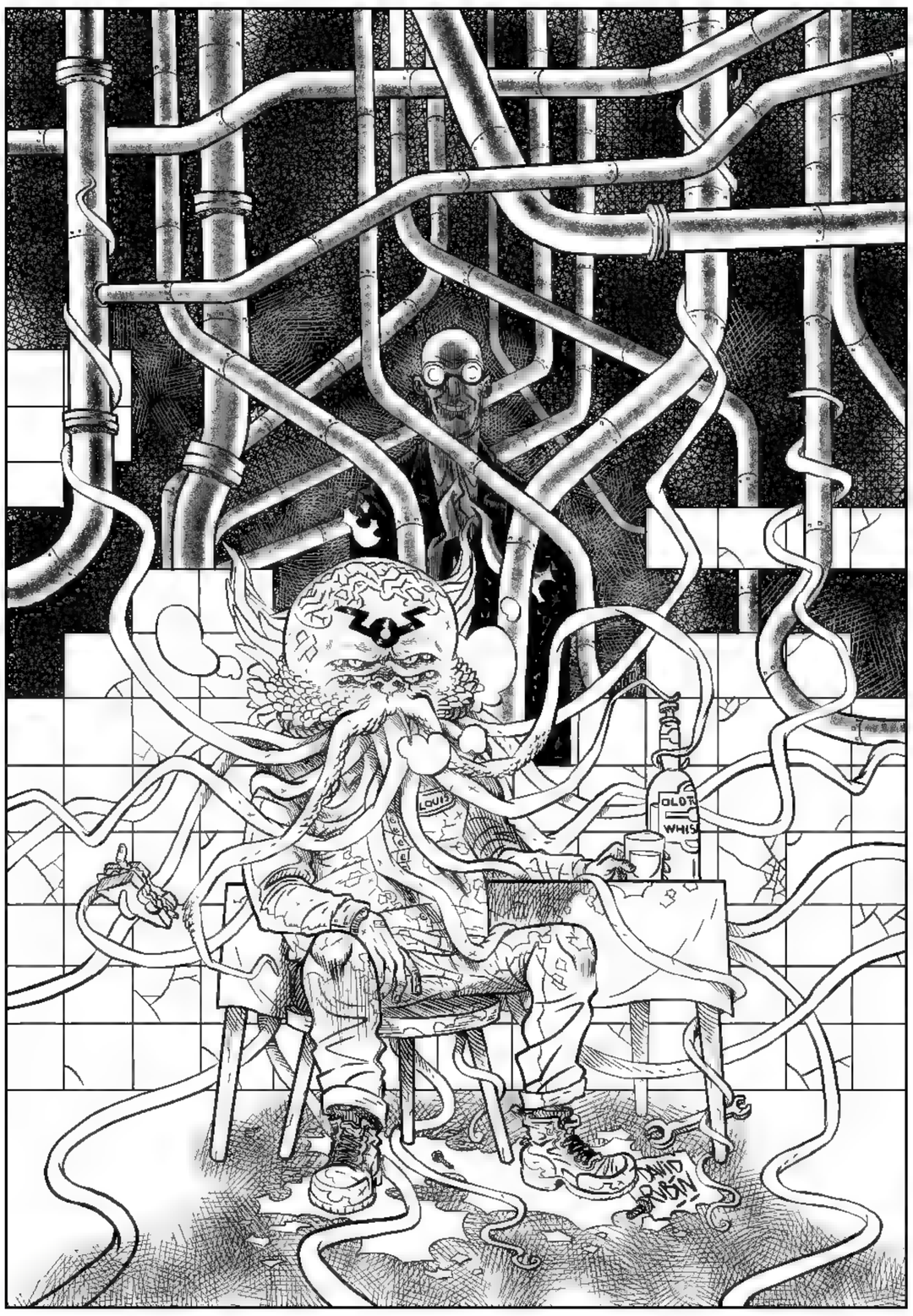


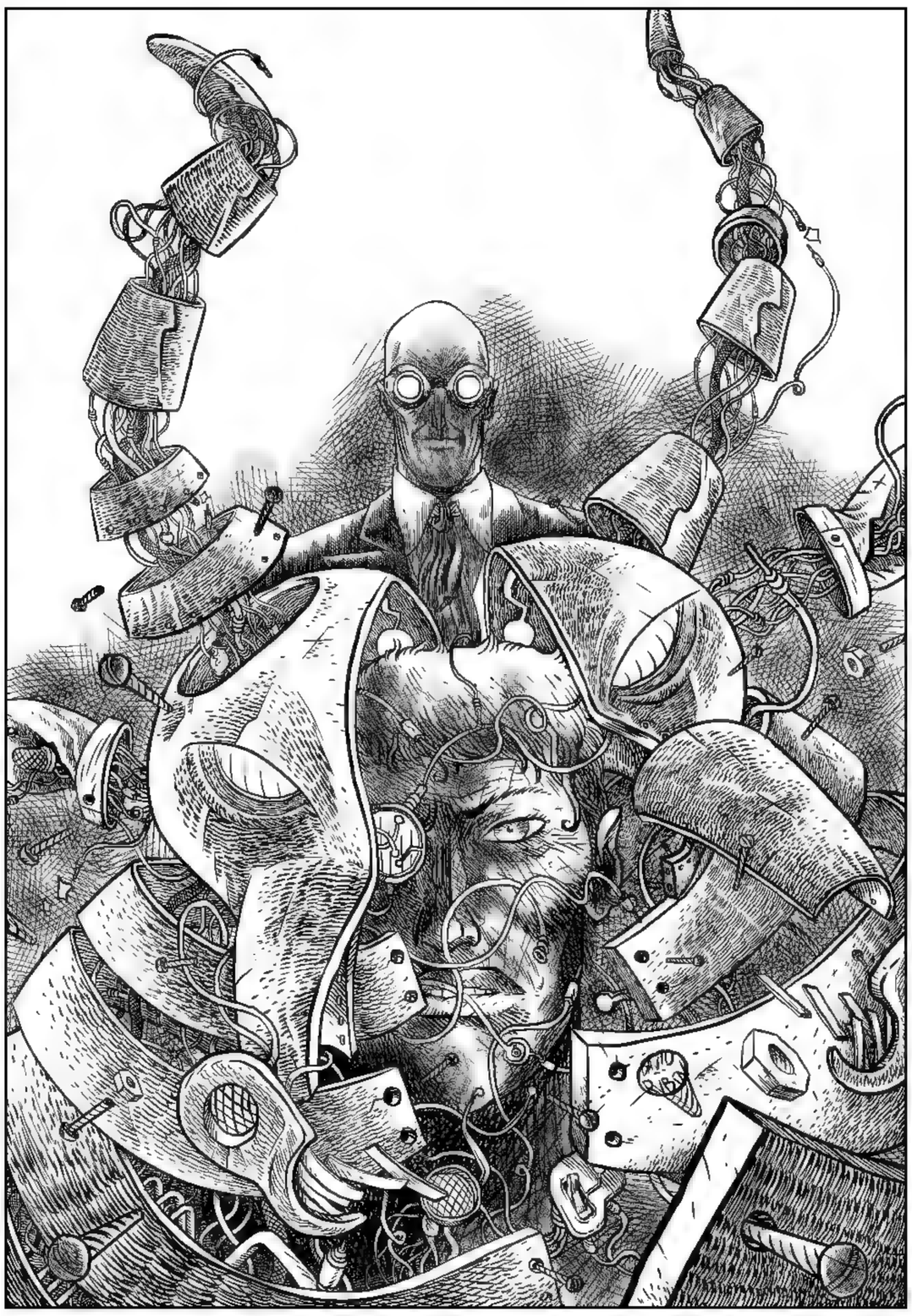




DR: Here's the cover process for issue one. This was the first time that I drew Sherlock Frankenstein, I think. The original design of that main character is by Dean Ormston. My idea with the first cover was create an image that showed the reader how dangerous and terrible Sherlock can be—and also make it a really kickass image for a kickass character.

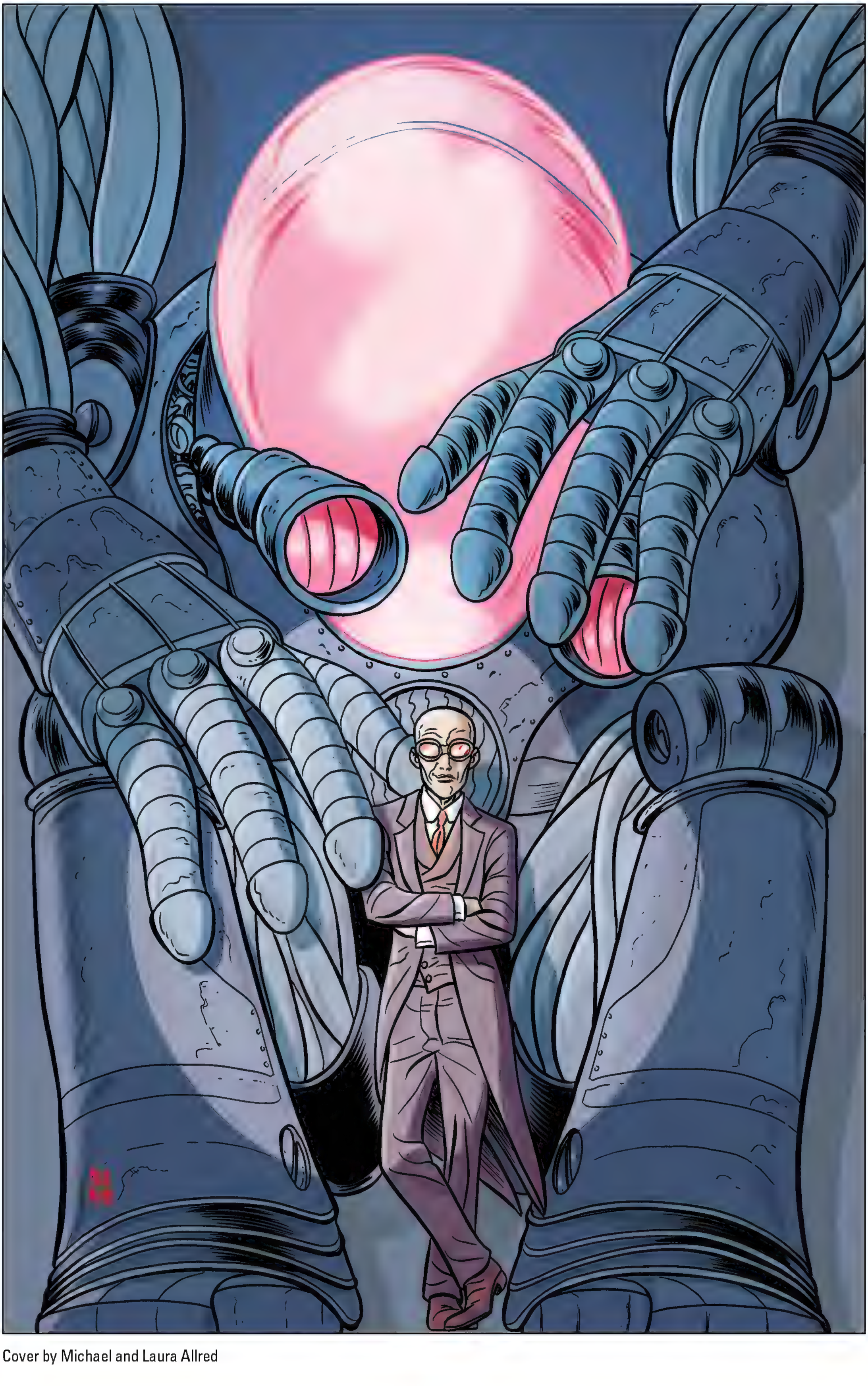






DR: On this page you can see the art process from roughs to inks of the issue #2 cover featuring the new Cthu-Lou—my favorite villain of the miniseries. Also shown here and on the right are the inks for the issue #3 and #4 covers which were totally done in digital.

DAVIDRUIN



Cover by Michael and Laura Allred

Cover by Daniel Warren Johnson and Mike Spicer

DOCTOR ANDROMEDA™

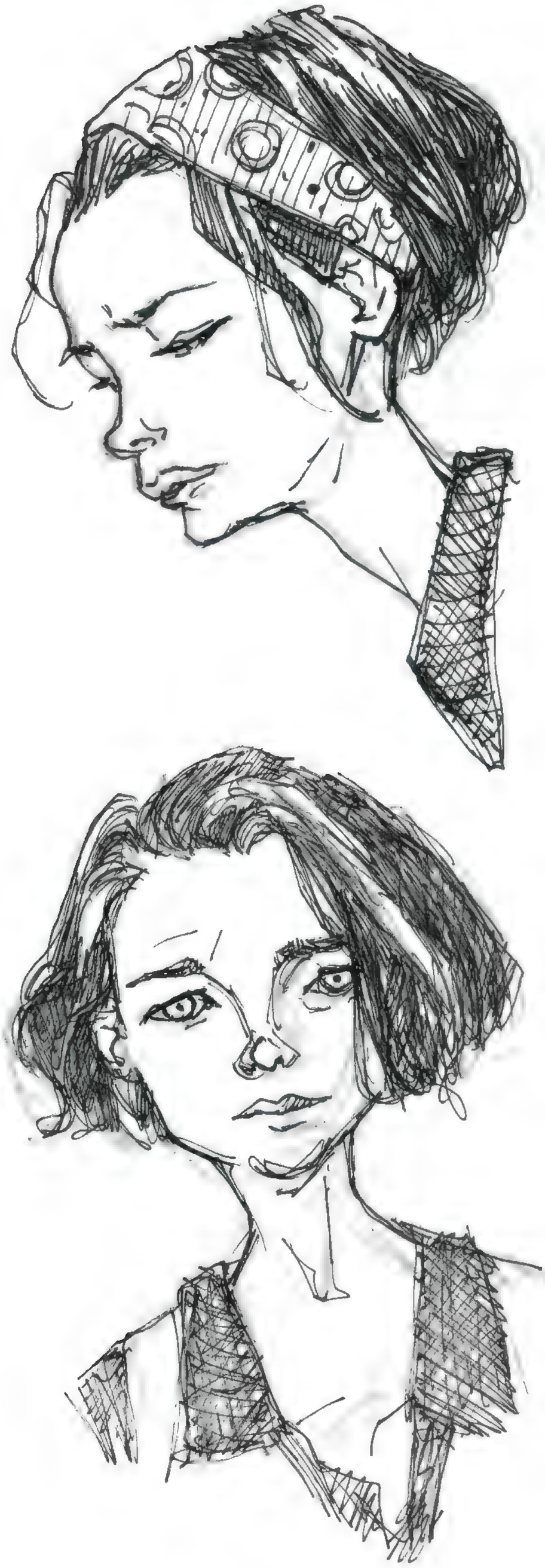
SKETCHBOOK

NOTES BY MAX FIUMARA AND JEFF LEMIRE

DOCTOR ANDROMEDA

MAX FIUMARA: Doctor Andromeda's original design was created by David Rubín, and then I added my take on it. I was interested in making something special with the costume shapes—something more notorious. Also I added some more science-y features to the costume like making the goggles look like a pair of tiny telescopic lenses.

With Jimmy's design I thought he needed to look older than he really was and also sad and dejected, so I made him wear clothes that would look like what he would wear from his past life.



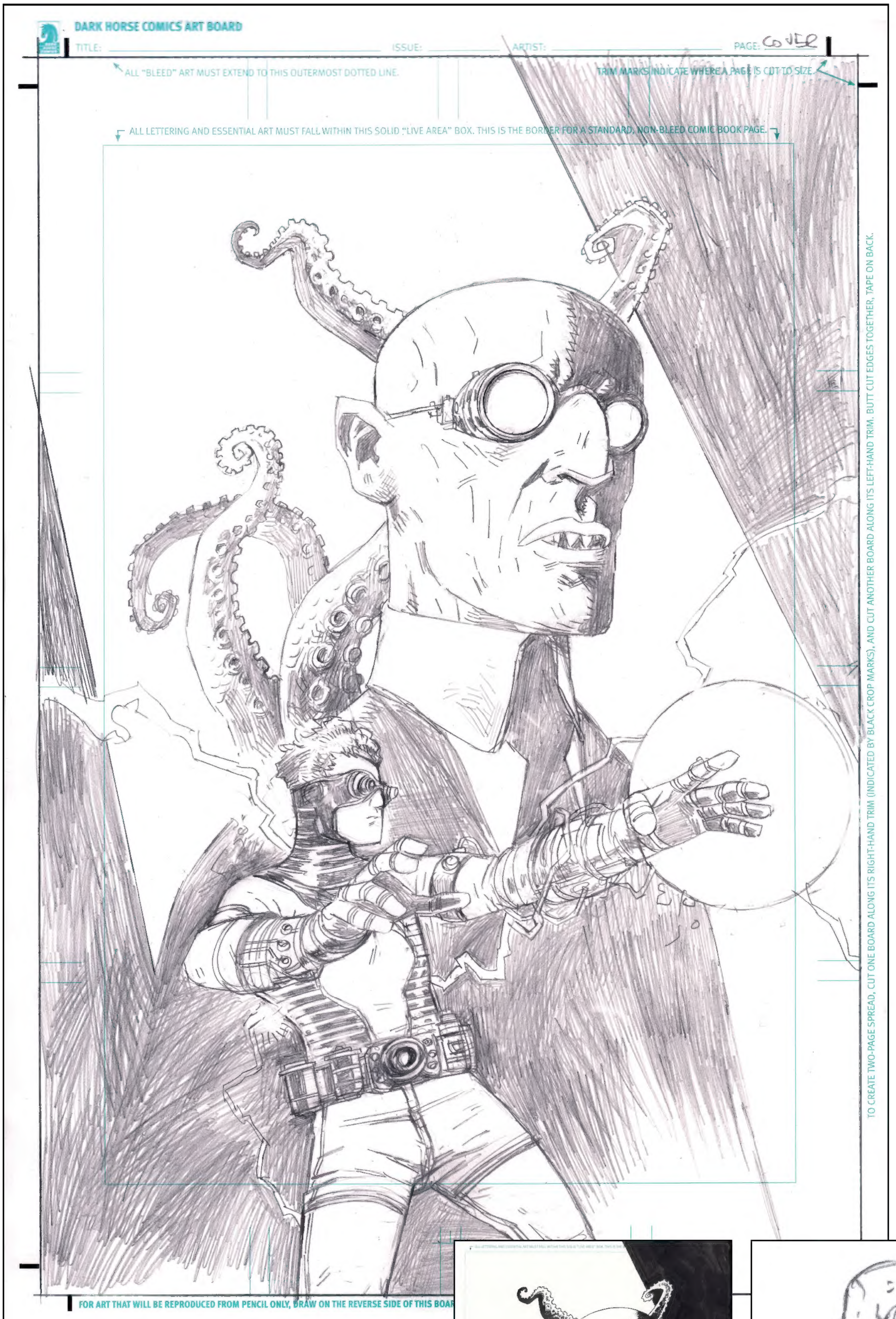
JOAN

MF: Joan is my favorite character. I wanted to make her strong at the beginning of the series and not so much at the end. She has to go through a lot of awful stuff in her life, so she needed to look tough, but also to have that look in her eyes that something is not right because of her husband.

JEFF LEMIRE: I was worried that Max wouldn't want to draw the 1940s New York that the script called for, but was pleasently surprised when he told me that this was his favorite era of American history. He really excelled at creating real characters, and having them page on the page in a realistic way.

(FACING) DOCTOR ANDROMEDA #4 PAGE 22 INKS

MF: Not much to say for this emotive scene. I just wanted to make a great, final shot of Doc accepting his reality while hugging the fragile body of his dead son in the emptiness of space.



JEFF LEMIRE: It's really great seeing Dean's rendition of some of the characters he hasn't drawn interiors for. He designed Sherlock of course and has drawn him numerous times, but this is the first time I've seen him draw Doc Andromeda, and it's wonderful. This cover has a great retro sci-fi/horror movie vibe.

DEAN ORMSTON: Although I had drawn Sherlock Frankenstein a few times before, I decided that with this cover I wanted to pander to my love of old horror movies, and, as a result, Sherlock has more than a passing resemblance to Max Schreck in the 1922 movie *Nosferatu*.

JEFF LEMIRE is the award winning, *New York Times*–bestselling author of such graphic novels as *Essex County*, *Sweet Tooth*, and *Underwater Welder*, and cocreator of *Descender* with Dustin Nguyen, *Black Hammer* with Dean Ormston, *Plutona* with Emi Lenox, and *Gideon Falls* with Andrea Sorrentino.

Many of Jeff's book are in active development for Film or TV, including *Essex County*, *Underwater Welder*, *Plutona*, *Gideon Falls*, *Descender*, *Family Tree*, and the *Black Hammer* universe at Legendary Entertainment with Lemire attached as screenwriter and executive producer.

Lemire's *Sweet Tooth* is currently being adapted into a Netflix series produced by Robert Downey Jr., set to be released in early 2021.

He lives in Toronto, Canada with his wife and son and their troublesome pug, Lola.

DEAN ORMSTON is a British illustrator who entered comics with *Judge Dredd Megazine* and *2000 AD* before moving onto work with Vertigo on *Sandman* with Neil Gaiman, *Lucifer* and *The Unwritten* with Mike Carey, *The Eaters* with Peter Milligan, *House of Secrets* with Steven T. Seagle, *Book of Magic* and *Bodies* with Si Spencer, and *Northlanders* with Brian Wood. He is currently working on his Eisner Award winning series *Black Hammer* with Jeff Lemire.

He lives in Yorkshire, England with his wife, no kids and no troublesome pug.

AN EXPANDED LOOK AT THE WORLD OF JEFF LEMIRE AND DEAN ORMSTON'S EISNER AWARD–WINNING *BLACK HAMMER* UNIVERSE, WITH TWO COMPLETE SERIES DRAWN BY DAVID RUBÍN AND MAX FIUMARA.

Sherlock Frankenstein lies at the heart of the mystery of what happened to Black Hammer, Spiral City's greatest hero, and Black Hammer's daughter is determined to uncover his role.

Doctor Andromeda, an aged crime fighter, desperately struggles to reconnect with his estranged son as he takes on personal demons and interstellar battles.

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